Interview with Paul M. Cleveland

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR PAUL M. CLEVELAND

Interviewed by: Thomas Stern

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Q: First of all, on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, let me welcome you to the first of a series of sessions that we will hold. My first question will be to ask you to talk a little about your background with the object of trying to find out what lead you into the Foreign Service.

CLEVELAND: I was born in Boston in 1931, but I was for the most part raised in New York and Washington. I attended schools in Washington until I entered Phillips Academy, Andover. After that, I started Yale University, where I graduated in 1953 with an English major.

Following graduation, I entered the Air Force and after a year's training, was assigned to Germany where I flew transport planes all over Europe. It was during this tour that I developed an interest and a desire to join the Foreign Service. I had heard about the Foreign Service from friends at Yale, who were considering joining that organization, although none of then ever did. On several occasions, while in Munich during my military service, I went to the Consulate General, where I had some friends. They of course told me a lot more about the Foreign Service.

When I left the Air Force in 1956, I first worked in the Department of the Navy in Washington. (My first job offer was from the NEW YORK TIMES which was looking for a copy boy for $48 per week, which was not enough to make ends meet.) While working for the Navy, I attended Georgetown's Foreign Service School at night in an effort to raise my academic standards which had been somewhat lackluster at Yale. By this time, it was clear to me that I wanted to be involved in international relations. Most of my family had devoted their lives to the government. I had three older cousins—Harlan, Van and Stanley—who had encouraged me in the direction of government work, even while I was in college. Stanley actually was Foreign Service officer.

While at Georgetown, I took courses in international economics, diplomatic history and other such subject matters.

I took the Foreign Service written entrance examination in December, 1956 in Washington and the oral in early 1957—both in Washington. The written was at this time a three hour exam—multiple choice—in which I managed to get about three out of four answers correctly. I felt that if an applicant had had good freshmen classes in several disciplines, he or she could pass the exam. There were for example several questions on weather, which I was able to answer in light of my Air Force experience. But during the oral examination, one of the panel members noted that I had not done so well in the economic section, answering only three out of 34 questions correctly. I pointed out that that was pretty good because I had only tried to answer four econ questions. I must say the panel was not amused by my response.

The panel members were properly stern. The first part of that examination was relatively easy because, as I anticipated, they asked me a lot of personal questions about my background. Then the questions began to change. I remember one that dealt with the economic change in the United States and particularly with the move south of the New England industrial base. I fumbled around with that answer for a while. After the end of the interview, the candidate was asked to step outside the room and await the decision.

When the panel summoned me back, the chairman said that I had passed, but “weakly”. He suggested that I need considerable more knowledge. Nevertheless, I was very pleased to have passed both the written and oral ordeals.

After the oral, I had to wait for the medical and security clearances. In fact, the process was rather expeditious because I think many new recruits were being taken in that year. I entered the Foreign Service in July, 1957 and went to the A-100 course of the Foreign Service Institute. I don't remember too much about that course, but I believe that it was a pretty good, highly concentrated few weeks of indoctrination into the Department of State and the Foreign Service. I believe that the consular segment of the course lasted for a week or two, and was a very good introduction into a subject with which I never subsequently had any acquaintance. I was one of the rare recruits who never had to serve in a consular job; most of my colleagues did.

What else? I remember Bushrod Axel from the Department of Agriculture telling us that there were about three million farmers at the time which was about twice as many as necessary. We had someone who talked to us about cross-cultural experiences which I found fascinating. Loy Henderson told us to do our best, not worry about the next guy.

There were about 25-30 members in my class. It consisted of a great variety of people. Some, like Frank Carlucci, became well known—although Frank didn't join the class until about mid course. He had been in the Foreign Service for more than a year, but had never attended the A-100 course. Bob Oakley and Dan O'Donahue were members. As I suppose happens frequently, some of us in that entrance course are still friends to this day—almost forty years later. There were a very few women, mostly in the preceding classes. One of the questions I had been asked during my orals was to discuss the new practice of appointing new Foreign Service officers from a broad spectrum of universities and colleges —not restricting the Foreign Service to Ivy League graduates. I said that geographic distribution was a meritorious goal, but that excellence should never be diluted. My class

had several Ivy League graduates, but also included some very capable people from all regions of the US. I don't recall that we had any minorities in the class.

The A-100 course lasted about four months. I did not attend the subsequent consular course which people whose first assignments would be in that line of work were required to attend. Somewhat to my disappointment, my first assignment was to a Washington office—A/OPR. I had expressed some interest in becoming an economic officer—at least for a few years—which is probably why I was assigned to the administrative area. My cousins had all been involved in economic matters, which undoubtedly influenced my views to a degree. I must admit that I didn't have the slightest idea what A/OPR was. I looked at the phone directory to see what the initials stood for. When my assignment was announced, I remembered that one of the oral examination panel members had asked me whether I would be interested in being an administrative officer. Not having the slightest idea what “administration” was, but perhaps believing that it involved running the Foreign Service, I think that I suggested that I would not have any objections to such assignment. That could well have been the reason for my assignment to A/OPR. I am not at all sure now how I spent my days in that office, but I do remember that I was located in an unairconditioned old Navy annex office for about six months. About three or four junior officers were assigned to A/OPR. My A-100 colleagues did not commiserate about my fate since such assignments were relatively commonplace then; many junior officers were assigned to administrative functions, as well of course to the consular operations. We did commiserate with a fellow named Jim Duffey who was sent to Vientiane, Laos, as the Budget and Fiscal Officer. That didn't look like a very promising career start. In fact, he left the Foreign Service soon afterwards to work for the Mellon Bank.

From A/OPR, I went on to become the special assistant to Tom Estes, then the head of OPR. Estes was a very nice man—a fine individual. He was full of energy and managed to accomplish a lot of things. One of his major tasks was the construction of the present State Department building, then under construction. That was in addition to the myriad of smaller

tasks that fall on OPR. But my strongest memories of Estes had to do with his decency as a human being.

One of the basic concerns of the day was the personal conduct of Foreign Service Officers overseas. An Ambassador had sold an automobile for twice the amount that it had cost him. That became a celebrated case. We had another similar case in an another country. All of these episodes resulted in a very lengthy memorandum to the Assistant Secretary for Administration outlining a set of recommendations intended to develop a new standard of conduct overseas. I was involved in writing up a guidebook on this subject.

In OPR, I didn't learn a lot about the part of the Department in which I subsequently spent most of my career—East Asia. I did obviously learn something about administration that stood me in good stead later, although again, I think, the assignment would have been more valuable to me if it had come after I had had more experience in the Department.

I was busy enough during these two years, but less so than later. You must remember that I was a brand new junior officer and had lots to learn. I don't know that I performed as well as I might have, had I had more experience. I am not sure that I always knew what I was doing and I certainly was passive because I still had so much to learn. The OPR special assistant reviewed all mail coming to the Deputy Assistant Secretary; I would always ask Estes what I should do about one matter or another. With more experience, I think I could have initiated some actions on my own.

One thing that I did was to review all inspection reports which at the time were both numerous and voluminous. I briefed them for Estes so that he would have a feeling how our part of the administrative function was being performed both at home and overseas. I worked closely with Dot Burris, Estes' secretary, on numerous small projects; i.e. I did a lot of things that she didn't want to do or for which she didn't have time. I followed Jim Rosenthal in the special assistant job; he also was a junior officer. Years later, Estes ran into us one day when we were together chatting; that started a reminiscing discussion

of our OPR days which was a lot of fun. As I said, I thought highly of Estes. I was also impressed by others like Ambassador Robert Newbegin. As a newcomer, I thought that all of those I had contact with were fine people. They all seemed bright and competent.

Q: In 1959, you then went to Canberra. How did that come about?

CLEVELAND: Before I went to Canberra, I went back to FSI to learn a foreign language. That was German in my case; that was the language that I had chosen because I had lived in Munich when in the Air Force and had some knowledge of the language. I had enjoyed Germany and hoped that sometime I might return to it for a tour. I achieved the 3-3 level and was then assigned, naturally, to Canberra, Australia—an English speaking post. I was somewhat disappointed with the assignment, but at least I had heard of the place. I called Carter, my wife, to tell her the news. When I got home that evening, she asked why we were going to Canberra. When I inquired further, she told me that it was in the middle of the Amazon jungle. She had found a place named “Canbra”, which was in the jungle. I think she was quite relieved when she found out that our future lay in civilization. In any case, the assignment came as a surprise. I am not sure there was much rhyme or reason for it, but it was an assignment as an economic officer which I welcomed.

The Economic Section in Canberra was a three-officer section; I was the junior man. Unlike some of my colleagues, I did not have a rotational assignment; I was the only junior officer in the Embassy; there were a couple assigned to our Consulate General in Sydney —one of whom was Tony Quainton—later ambassador to several posts—and another was Jay Katzen. I went right to the Economic Section and stayed there for two years of a three year tour. Bill Knight was the Economic Counselor—he was succeeded by Eddie Shott. Then there was a labor officer. Knight was very bright and personable. The Embassy also had an Agricultural Attach# who had an Australian assistant. Between the two of them, they did all of the agricultural reports, which were numerous.

I spent most of my time collecting economic data, which became the basis for reports. I did not initially write any of the reports, but later on, I participated in drafting those reports. I remember well the first one that I did; it was so full of blue corrections, that I was really upset. I talked to the labor attach# about what Knight had done to my report; he suggested that I forget about it. Then I went to Knight to ask him about my first report; he just said that I would have to learn to do better. He was right; I had a lot to learn, especially about writing, but my pride was certainly wounded after that first drafting experience. Eddie Shott was a better teacher; he would spend time with me going over each report to help me improve not only my analysis, but my presentation as well. Shott really became a mentor; he felt a responsibility toward the junior officers that worked for him and spent time with me to help improve my performance. He was meticulous about his efficiency reports and generally quite fair; he would make changes in the ER, if his original comments seemed entirely unfair to me. He was a good leader. I have always been grateful for the time he spent training me. At that stage of my development, I had to learn to write; I thought I knew, but I learned that I needed a good deal of tutoring and I am thankful that Eddie gave me the time. I believe that under his steady guidance, I did improve.

In those days, we still had a lot of mandatory reports that all posts had to submit. A lot of those were routine.

The Ambassador was William Sebald, a former Admiral who had been on Douglas MacArthur's staff in Tokyo and had been our Ambassador to Burma. He was a small, acerbic man, described by the Station Chief as “not a leader of men”. He severely chastised me one morning because a cable had not gotten out the night before. I told him that I had completed and given the telegram to his secretary the previous afternoon. That didn't seem to placate him; he told me in no uncertain terms that it was an officer's duty to make sure that his or her work was completed by the day's end and on its way to Washington; that was not his secretary's responsibility. I didn't respond, but I thought

that Sebald was wrong both on the merits and on the process. Sebald was a “hands-on” manager, but he certainly was not very popular with is staff.

In 1961, Sebald was replaced by Bill Battle, the son of the former governor of Virginia—an up and coming lawyer with political connections in Virginia who had been a PT boat commander in President Kennedy's WWII squadron. Through that connection he had been appointed Ambassador to Australia. He was extremely popular; he became a leading figure in Canberra almost from the moment he arrived, partly because he was a scratch golfer—in fact, he went on to become the President of the United States Golf Association. I liked Battle tremendously, and also his lovely wife, Barrie.

The DCM was Bill Belton. He was not an Australian expert; in fact he had spent most of his career in Latin America. He was a good officer and we enjoyed working for him.

When we arrived, Canberra was a relatively small city—about 40,000 people. While we were there, it grew approximately 50%. Now it is about 300,000. It was a delightful small city with a fairly high concentration of intelligent people. It was the seat of government; it was the home of the Australian National University; it had a large diplomatic corps, as well as a large number of media people. The social life centered around the outdoors—tennis, golf, swimming, etc. As I said, it was the Capital of Australia; there was a Parliament building. Many of the delegates did not reside in Canberra. But most of Ministers and their staffs lived in Canberra, so that I would see socially a lot of those that I dealt with officially. The social life was very relaxed and pleasant. We had several circles of friends—one of government people—Foreign and Trade Ministries, some of whom we are still in touch with. One is the Australian Ambassador to NATO; he is the godparent of one of our children. Then we had a circle of friends who had nothing to do with our official capacity; it was a circle that we were never fully able to replicate in later years. These were doctors and lawyers whom we met here and there. We went skiing with some of them on several occasions. The third circle of friends consisted of people our age and rank in other embassies, some of whom we have kept track of. The social life was fairly active,

although as you rise in the Foreign Service it becomes more active and more burdensome. In Canberra, life was extremely pleasant; it was great for raising our children-actually one was born there. We lived at 1A Mugga Way, which has recently been torn down. It was a nice house in a very nice neighborhood within walking distance of the Embassy. In retrospect, our tour in Canberra was a lot of fun; it may not have been professionally sufficiently challenging—although I learned a fair amount—but it certainly was pleasant enough. It was a good tour.

As I said, I did a lot of statistical research. I took what were primarily government press releases on economic conditions in Australian and translated those into reports for Washington. My first venture outside this relatively mundane task was a series of reports I wrote after taking the sole trip I took with the Ambassador, although I may have accompanied him on a couple of short trips to Sydney. He went all around Australia and I reported on our various stops—the asbestos mines in Western Australia, the “stations” in central Australia, the Kakatoo Island iron ore development. By this time, I had learned to write reasonably well—I might add that Carter had actually done some of the research on the mines for me which helped my reporting considerably. My trip enabled me to talk to a lot of people gaining a lot of knowledge that I could not have gotten from publications. So I was able to put together some brief reports on economic matters that had not been covered before. It was my first real contribution in the Foreign Service. The US Bureau of Mines wrote me a note welcoming my reports. Some of my findings surprised them.

The Cleveland family also traveled on its own in Australia—to Queensland, the Great Barrier reef—a grand and wonderful experience—to Melbourne and to some other cities.

There has been an almost time honored tradition of rivalry in Australia between the Embassy and the large Consulates General, particularly Sydney. I became marginally involved in that because, as the junior member of the Embassy staff, I did consular work, which consisted of issuing diplomatic visas; i.e. a clerical job, stamping visas into the officials' passports. If I took action beyond that, Orrie Taft, the consular officer in Sydney,

would jump up and down in rage because he felt that I was invading his “turf”. From Taft's point of view, allowing me to give out diplomatic visas was already a great favor that he was doing me. I hardly shared his view; in fact, I thought that Taft was putting a real damper on any kind of initiative that I might have wished to take; it was the most bureaucratic attitude that I think I ever faced in the Foreign Service. In general, I think the Consulate General in Sydney did try to exercise as much independence of the Embassy as it could. Larry Vass was the CG; he had been the chief of the Aviation Division in the Department. He was a substantial character and he made a point of dealing with the top businessmen in Sydney. He would come to the Embassy periodically to report on his contacts; in fact, he did have a substantial operation in Sydney, which essentially ran itself.

My first tour as an economic officer was helpful in that I became trained as a reporting officer, even if much of the training was unconscious growth. I did feel at the time that I was certainly not yet a real economic officer; I had not had much academic background in the subject, and I had still lots to learn about GNP, national income, budgets, etc. In fact, I took a course in Keynesian economics at Canberra University College, which later became part of the Australian National University. That was very helpful in making me more aware of the “dismal” science.

My lecturer at CUC was a man named Coombs. I remember him primarily because he would often arrive in the classroom visibly inebriated. I know that some have accused the ANU of taking a leftist view of economics, but I think Coombs did not tilt his lectures; it was straight Keynes. There was some communist influence in the University, but I don't think that I ever viewed ANU as a communist front. The Labor Party, on the other hand, did harbor some radical leftists—people who advocated extreme measures. I don't want to leave the impression that the Labor Party as a whole was a communist party; it was not. The majority of its members were simply progressively oriented, but still in the main stream of political thinking—they were not communists by any stretch of the imagination.

I attended an Australian political association conference held in Albert Hall in Canberra —the coldest place in the Southern Hemisphere. While shivering, I listened to many speakers. One was Bob Hawke, then a young firebrand of the Labor Party. Even then, he was viewed by many as a potential future leader of the Party. At the time, he was a member of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). Hawke gave a fiery speech about bread lines and destitute workers and the downtrodden Australian masses. I was sitting behind Gough Whitlam (later an Australian PM), and I think it was the consensus of the attendees that Hawke was there to make an impression—that the substance was not as important as the ear catching phrases. There were in fact no bread lines, no major unemployment, no downtrodden in 1962.

We did become friends with H.W. Arndt, who was a German Jewish refugee who had come to Australia after WWII, and was certainly in the left-center part of the Labor Party —I guess he was basically a socialist. He was a well known economist—a professor at ANU. We became personal friends and remain so still. Undoubtedly, by osmosis, I learned a little of how a socialist saw the world and gained some insights into their views of the capitalist world. But I don't believe that whatever leftist sympathies may have resided at ANU had any impact on my academic learning. As I suggested, we had a fairly wide circle of Australian friends. I liked them very much; they were very much like Americans, although they steadfastly refused to acknowledge any such comparison. We used to have long discussions on that subject, which made me increasingly aware of the growing sense of nationalism cropping up in Australia, particularly among the younger Australians. I think Americans and Australians always got along very well; there were some cultural differences, but fundamentally we were very much alike, and I enjoyed their company immensely. This friendship was of course helped by the fact that in the period of my tour, there were no major issues between the two countries. We had some differences over agricultural policies, but nothing major. During my last year in Canberra, while I was serving in the political section, I did notice the beginning of tensions concerning our bases and military forces in Australia.

Prime Minister Menzies was a great figure in my eyes. I met with him, shook his hand and exchanged a few words with him. I was greatly impressed with him, but then at that stage of life, I was highly impressionable anyway.

As I said, I spent the last of my year of my Canberra tour in the Political Section. One of the officers in the Embassy died and another resigned from the Foreign Service. So suddenly, the Embassy found itself short-handed. I had gotten along well with Eddie Shott and Bill Belton, and they asked me whether I would consider extending my tour for one more year. I would be switched to the Political Section to take the junior reporting officer position there, even though the job was rated higher than my own grade. I thought that it was a great opportunity and therefore went to work for Don Lamm, the Political Counselor. Lamm had been described by Belton as an “old shoe diplomat”; he had been in the Foreign Service for many years and had served in Canberra previously. Between Australian tours, he had served in Africa; he always recalled that President Nixon had visited his post and had taken exception to something that Lamm had done, which ruined his career. But he happily returned to Australia where he and Belton would spend some of their off-duty time bird watching. Don was also a mentor, although probably not as precisely or as doggedly as Shott had been, but he was very nice and attentive. I remember that almost every Friday evening I would go to his house, have a beer and discuss the state of the world or the Foreign Service. Don had a great big German shepherd named “Lilly”, who would attack me whenever she saw me; that became a game after a while.

The Political Section was a two-men section; I was obviously the Number Two. Don was busy with the start of the negotiations on the new intelligence collection bases that we were trying to establish—a highly classified operation at the time. That left me to do most of what I would call the “routine” reporting. I did the WEEKA report, which required a meeting every week of the various components of the Embassy in which we decided what was worthy of reporting and analysis. I chaired those meetings even though much more

senior officers like Shott attended. The WEEKA was intended to be a weekly summary and analysis of political events and trends. So the WEEKA became my major responsibility —putting it together, the editing and the despatch of it. I learned a lot from that exercise about how to write and edit reports.

I also did some reporting of my own, mainly out of publicly available material; it was mostly a summary of media stories with sometimes a comment of my own added at the end.

In the last year, I started to cover Parliament. I had not done that before and I think I was probably too new at that kind of coverage, so I did not probably do as much contact work with Parliamentarians as a more seasoned officer might have. As in every deliberate body, there was always a lot of activity; without guidance, I did not have the experience to distinguish the wheat from the chaff. I did meet some of the younger Parliamentarians, including Malcolm Fraser, who subsequently became Prime Minister and Douglas Anthony, who became head of the Country Party. These politicians were all about my age and I used to talk to them periodically. I began to understand the process of talking to politicians, which obviously is an important task for a Foreign Service officer. And I liked it immensely.

I used to talk to these parliamentarians most often in large common rooms. Their offices were in an old Parliamentary building—very small and sparse and cramped. I would also see them socially, as in the Canberra Hotel Bar on Friday nights. I also called on Foreign Ministry people in their offices to talk about matters of mutual concern. We did not have any major problems with the Australians at the time. There was considerable interest in Washington about the Australian labor movement which kept our Labor Attach# busy. But international political problems—none that I can really remember. It was mostly a matter of coordinating common views.

During my last summer in Australia, at my own expense because the Embassy refused to pay, I went to Papua New Guinea. That was the most interesting experience I had during

my first tour “down under”. I had become more or less conversant with the requirements of a political reporting officer, although it was a slow learning curve. I realized from that work that the emergence of Papua New Guinea might well become a difficult problem. Australia was the trustee for that territory under a UN mandate, but there was considerable talk at ANU and in other fora that Australia needed to begin to think about how Papua New Guinea might become independent. Don Lamm had gone there during the previous summer and I wanted to see the land for myself. So I went at my own expense. I stayed there for about 10 days and talked to 80-90 people. It was absolutely fascinating. We had no representation in Papua New Guinea; its coverage was actually in the Canberra consular district. Because of that, incidentally, I had been deeply involved in Governor Nelson Rockefeller's son's disappearance. I was the contact point in the Embassy on all questions concerning that unfortunate event. The Dutch tried to help find him, but neither they nor anyone was ever successful.

I made appointments with various Papua New Guinea personalities through the Australian Ministry of Territories. I also got some help from the CIA man at the Embassy who used his good offices with his Australian counterparts. So I saw a lot of people. I went to Port Moresby and Rabaul and Lae and Goroka. I saw coffee planters; I saw patrol officers overlooking the far reaches of the Australian domains—they were literally going into the jungles shaking people out of trees. I ranged far and wide by plane primarily; you didn't drive in Papua New Guinea in the 1960s; it was mostly jungle with very few if any roads connecting the cities. Once in a city, you could drive around and go a few miles outside, but transportation between cities was by plane unless you wanted to trek on jungle paths cut out during WWII.

I had talked to a lot of people in Canberra about Papua New Guinea. It was the first time in my career that I had become steeped in a single subject—the independence of Papua New Guinea. From all my conversations both in Canberra and in Papua New Guinea I came to the conclusion that there was absolutely no indigenous political development in the territory. The Australians offered their rules and regulations and processes, but no

local organizations had actually been developed, even though some Australian officials were trying to encourage political development. So in the early 1960s, there were virtually no indigenous political organizations in Papua-New Guinea. Efrahim Jubilee of Raboul had gone to the UN along with an Australian—Dudley McCarthy; there was John Guise—part French—who could walk through a marketplace and be recognized by everybody. But there was no single local person who knew how to organize a political group. There were very few natives who had received a university education; in terms of political education and experience, there was virtually none. Approximately 13 years later, Papua-New Guinea achieved its independence. It had gone a long way from what I saw in 1962. Most of the people I talked to were Australians. I probably talked to no more than half a dozen Papua New Guineans largely because they were not that accessible. I think many of the Australians I talked to understood that Papua-New Guinea should and would achieve independence. They had seen the model in Africa and other parts of the world and understood that Australia would have to give Papua-New Guinea its independence sooner rather than later. As I suggested, it was this awakening in the Australian psyche that caused me to be interested in Papua-New Guinea in the first place. There were people who felt very strongly that Papua-New Guineans had to be turned into a modern political system as quickly as possible. Both Don Lamm and I focused on the questions whether the necessary indigenous leadership existed or was being developed. My conclusion was that such leadership did not exist nor were there enough people close to reaching the necessary level of organizing ability and sophistication.

Even on the economic side, the major developments were under the guidance of the Australians. Many retired military officers had been granted large plots of land for development and they built coffee plantations. It was a marvelous illustration of pioneering, particularly in the highlands. I met some marvelous human beings, particularly Australians —most of them homesteaders, some of whom had been extraordinarily successful.

I spent a very interesting evening with some Australians in Port Moresby, listening to what they had been doing to bring the Papua-New Guineas into the modern world. I took pages

and pages of notes; unfortunately, the note book was lost somewhere along the line. I did send a brief despatch to the Department at the end of my trip, but I did so grudgingly because I was annoyed that the government had not paid for my trip. I thought that it was part of my official duties and that I had earned to some measure greater support than I had received from the Embassy. So my attitude was that this was my own trip and my observations were essentially mine, and since no one seemed to have cared very much, I didn't really extend myself in reporting my findings. Nevertheless, I found the trip personally very rewarding; I learned a lot about a remote part of the world, which had been left behind essentially by progress.

This experience with Papua New Guinea brings to mind the issue of immigration to Australia which was being vigorously debated in the country in the early 1960s. One of my tasks in the Embassy was to put together a small reference library which included primarily material on Australia. Included in this small collection were a couple of books about the White Australia policy. I read them and became interested in the general subject of immigration. I called the Foreign Ministry to ask it about the “White Australia” immigration policy. My question was met by a long silence. Finally, the man at the other end of the phone suggested that I call the Ministry of Immigration, which I did. I said that I would like to come to speak to someone about Australian immigration policy. That was not easy, but I finally spoke to some one who claimed to be the Ministry's spokesman. I asked him about the “white” immigration policy. He denied that any such policy existed. I told him that I had just read a book which clearly documented that in fact there was such a policy. The spokesman said that he didn't care what I had read and that there was no such thing as a “white” Australian immigration policy. Despite the evidence to the contrary, the spokesman continued to deny that any such policy existed. I wrote all of this up in a report. I am convinced that there was an exclusionary policy and that only “whites” needed to apply for immigration. The Australians had a euphemism for it and denied its existence, but there was a clear exclusionary policy for all applicants, but whites.

As far as I know, we never made an issue of it; it may have been mentioned in passing at some private meetings but we certainly did not make an issue of it at higher levels. Perhaps the Australians thought that my inquiries were a prelude to some American initiative, which I am sure made them so defensive; little did they realize that I was essentially just satisfying a personal curiosity! I just naively blundered into a very sensitive issue.

I must say that the Australians were very sensitive to accusations on this point. They discussed their own views with us openly from time to time. I think most of my contacts—young Australians—reflected some concern about the potential "invasion" of Asians. The fear was that if the door were opened just a crack, the trickle would be followed by a flood which would quickly overwhelm the 12 million Australians living on the continent. I think that this fear has by now subsided, but it certainly was a major concern in the early 1960s. Although at that time the majority view was an exclusionary one, there were voices calling for a more liberal immigration policy basing their argument that Australia was in South Asia and that it had to find some ways to be a better neighbor. But I think among my friends and acquaintances, the existing immigration policy had strong support.

That tour in Canberra was a great learning experience for me. I learned a lot, and Carter and I also had a wonderful time. I believe our daughters Robin and Sandy remember it happily. And our first son, James, was born there.

Q: Then in November 1962, you were assigned to Bonn. Was that perhaps because you had taken German language training?

CLEVELAND: I think that that might have had something to do with it. Also in the annual questionnaire, I had requested an assignment to a German post. My first planned assignment to Germany, actually, was to be a consular officer in Munich. Then that was changed to consular officer in Hamburg. My DCM—Belton—in Canberra, together with John Ausland—then the Consul in Auckland—intervened and managed to get me

assigned as staff assistant to our Ambassador in Germany. That assignment turned out to be just short of a disaster for my career.

The Ambassador when I first arrived was Walter “Red” Dowling. I didn't know him when the assignment was made, but I was in Washington for a brief period trying to learn something about Germany and met Dowling then, while he was in Washington for consultations. He sort of looked me over and allowed the assignment to stand. So I went to Bonn, replacing an A-100 classmate, Alan Lee, as Dowling's staff aide. The DCM was Brewster Morris, who left soon thereafter to be our Ambassador to the Chad. Then we had Martin Hillenbrand as DCM, who was a great person.

Coburn Kidd was the Political Counselor; the Economic Minister was Ed Cronk. Basil Capella was the Administrative Counselor. For about the first four months of my tour in Bonn, I was assigned to the Political Section because Lee had not yet left. I was a staff aide “in waiting”.

The Embassy in Bonn was huge—900 Americans, 600 Germans. The Americans all lived in Plittersdorf—the “Golden Ghetto.” We liked that; the apartments were spacious and it was a great place for kids. It did cut us off from the German community, which disappointed me. I had hoped to become fluent in German and to become thoroughly acquainted with Germany. Living was easy—an American school, a club, a commissary, a protected environment—but it was not entirely satisfactory from a professional point of view. We did become acquainted with some Germans because my staff assistant job required some contacts with the Foreign Office and the Chancellor's Office primarily on administrative and protocol issues. That brought me into contact with a number of German officials, with whom we then socialized. There were also a few Germans who actually lived in Plittersdorf, with whom we became acquainted.

As was true in most European capitals, there was a circle of junior officers from all embassies who used to socialize together. In fact, a couple of them had been in Canberra

during our time there. One of our acquaintances was David Cornwall, a junior officer in the British Embassy, who later became known as John LeCarre. Unbeknownst to me at least, he was then writing “The Spy Who Came in From the Cold”. He was fascinating and a delightful dinner companion, who told brilliant stories in three languages.

But then the situation changed very rapidly. In early May, 1963, George McGhee arrived to succeed Dowling. He had been the Counselor and then the Under Secretary for Political Affairs in the Department. He apparently was fired by Kennedy, but Dean Rusk, who had been the Assistant Secretary for FE when McGhee was his counterpart for NEA, saved McGhee by sending him to Bonn as Ambassador. The story as I heard it told was that Rusk went to Kennedy and said that he would like to keep McGhee in the Department, to which the President agreed as long as it was not in Washington. So McGhee was given his choice of Ambassadorial assignments and chose Germany. At the time, Dowling was in a New York hospital undergoing surgery. He was told while laying in his hospital bed that he had been relieved of his duties as Ambassador to Germany. Dowling never came back to Bonn, so I never worked as his aide.

McGhee arrived in Bonn only a few months after I did. As I said, I was to replace Lee in the Spring of 1963. But President Kennedy decided to make a trip to Germany—the Germans at the time were somewhat depressed about their circumstances and we were worried about our relationships. The Berlin Wall had been put up and the Soviets were interfering with our access to Berlin. Essentially, Kennedy decided to go to Germany and run what we would characterize in the US as a “political campaign” to try to bolster German morale. McGhee knew of these plans when he arrived in May 1963 and decided almost immediately that Lee could not leave until after the Kennedy visit. Lee was put in charge of the “State Dinner.” He spent several months just doing that—every day, all day. It was unbelievable the amount of time that went into that dinner! I moved to the Ambassador's office about the same time that McGhee arrived and Alan and I shared that small office thereafter with me doing the staff aide work and he the dinner. I think Alan's efforts were a good illustration of the meticulousness and care that went into President

Kennedy's trip. I believe that that Kennedy trip changed entirely the nature of Presidential trips and became the model for subsequent Presidential trips to all overseas locations. I am not sure it was a change for the better for anybody!

McGhee's and my relationship was a disaster from the beginning. I had never met him before he came to Bonn. The whole McGhee family came to Bonn—Cecile and kids. My first real experience with the new Ambassador was on “Credential Presentation” Day. I arrived at the Residence with a batch of papers which Brewster Morris had told me to have ready for the Ambassador. McGhee took one look at them and said that they were not the right ones. In fact, they weren't. The party was to leave the Residence in about five minutes. I jumped in my little Volkswagen, dashed to the Embassy and back in six minutes. But George was already fuming, even though I got him the credentials in time for him to make his presentation. When I say “fuming” I should have said “exploded”. That was the first explosion which was followed by many others in the succeeding 13 months I worked for him. He never threw objects at me or anyone else, at least in my presence. But he was mercurial. As a junior officer, I was just thunder-struck by this man. No one had even treated me as McGhee did. I well remember one time when McGhee literally was pulling his hair as he sat down at his desk. Once having taken his chair, he took four pencils which were on his desk and broke each, one by one. I don't remember the object of his outrage, but when he was mad—which happened much too frequently—he was really mad.

Many years later, at a wedding, I ran into Marty Hillenbrand. We talked about George a little bit; I admitted that I had not perhaps performed as well as I might have, but Marty told me that many had had the same experience. I said that I had tried to satisfy him as best as I could, but I never was able to please him. Marty then said: “You know, he was a megalomaniac.” I told him that I hadn't known that, but that I could certainly testify that he behaved as one.

George was not happy with me, even though he kept me around for 13 months. My recollection of those unhappy days was that things were constantly going wrong. For example, at his request, I would arrange a trip to Munich for him that aborted. (That was one of my principal tasks; he went on 52 trips during the 13 months I worked for him). Of course, I could always count on weather being bad on the day he was scheduled to travel or some other equally uncontrollable event. No matter what we did, there were always glitches of one kind or another. I had two protocol assistants working for me and we still could barely keep up with McGhee's travel demands.

He also ran a hotel at the Residence; guests were continually coming and going which added to our work-load. McGhee's secretary was an old hand in the Foreign Service and very experienced in placing blame on someone else—usually me. Of course, with the volume of activities that McGhee generated, the law of averages would suggest that something would go wrong. He never remembered all the things that were done right; he only raged at the mishaps. The trips to Berlin were always a peril; there was a constant debate whether whatever went wrong was Bill Ryerson's fault—he was stationed in Berlin—or mine. I would be the first to admit that we did make mistakes at times, but very often McGhee's fury was just unwarranted.

I remember one time when McGhee returned from a two week trip, during which all had gone remarkably smoothly. He had gone through the Mediterranean with his entire family. On his return, he exploded in my office because we had rented a Volkswagen bus; I guess that was not good enough for George McGhee although I don't know what else could have accommodated all the passengers that were with him. Usually, I did not go on the trips with him, for which I was eternally thankful. I did accompany him when he went to Berlin, but I could barely afford that much time away from the office. We were a busy group just keeping up with McGhee, keeping late hours every evening and weekends as well.

McGhee's son was picked up once for a drug violation. It ran as a story in the “Stars and Stripes”—the Army newspaper. George was fit to be tied and called the CINC trying to get the editor fired. He was indeed a megalomaniac.

Toward the end of my 13 months' “survival course”, Dan Shore and the New York Times correspondent Art Olsen, took me aside at a party we were all attending. They interviewed me for 20 minutes or more about George McGhee and my relationship with him. In essence, I told them how he terrorized the staff—people like Coburn Kidd who was a very fine officer. George in fact ended Coburn's career. I remember Coburn coming into my office one day, accusing me of doing something. In fact, he had his facts entirely wrong and Coburn went away, somewhat mollified as far as I could see. But Coburn was lashing out at me because McGhee had lashed out at him. I was not the only one that McGhee would go after. He was unhappy with everybody, but since I was physically the closest to him, I took more than my share of George's eruptions. I was almost physically ill by the time the 13 months were up. I worried all the time; I did not do well. George wrote a devastating efficiency report on me that almost ended my career.

There are several lessons that I learned from my experiences with George. The first and most important was the absolute necessity to treat your staff as human beings. McGhee's ravings and rantings were not very effective communication and certainly he was not a leadership model. I told my wife that if I ever had anyone working for me, I prayed that I would never behave like McGhee did.

I did think that George was a “big time” operator—after all he had been an Under Secretary of State which for a junior officer was rather awesome. He was a stickler for good writing. One day, Dick Vine, who was the deputy chief of the Political Section, delivered a draft message to McGhee. The Ambassador took it with him in his car and I happen to be along watching McGhee breaking his lead pencils as he worked furiously on the Vine draft, muttering all the time, he couldn't understand how a senior foreign service officer could write so poorly. Years later, I told Vine of that experience; he was not very

fond of McGhee anyway and that episode certainly did not bring forth any exclamations of approval.

As I said, McGhee traveled a lot and was highly visible in Germany. At Christmas time, he would send out hundreds of cards to German friends and acquaintances. He ran his ambassadorship as a public relations firm, which I think was probably quite impressive to those who were out of range of his daily outbursts. He did last for five years in Germany; I am not sure what the Germans thought of him after his departure, but he certainly was a highly visible and active ambassador while he was there. He only learned a few German phrases, but he was seen in every corner of West Germany and Berlin. He also had lots of visitors; Jean Monnet once came to see him—they were, I believe, old friends. I don't know about his relationship with Adenauer or Erhard. Frankly, I was so inundated with the minutiae of running McGhee's office that I didn't have time for many observations. But as I said there was no question that McGhee operated at the highest levels of the German and American governments.

In the background of our relationships with the Germans, was always the specter of Soviet interference in our linkages to West Berlin and in Germany in general. They were very unpredictable. Sometimes, for example, they would permit us to enter East Berlin on the subway. But I tried it once with Bill Ryerson and we were turned back. So I never got to East Berlin. The same unevenness of policy existed on the Autobahns; sometimes we would get through without any problems; on others, we would be harassed. There were constant disputes with the Soviets about minutiae of travel to Berlin across East Germany —flags on trains, etc. The situation was certainly better than it was during the airlift, but we were always quite wary of the Soviets; we never knew whether they would try to shut us out of Berlin again. The Kennedy speech in 1963 in Berlin was in part intended to warn the Soviets about our resolution and it was quite effective; the picture of the President of the United States standing against the hated wall and pledging his solidarity with the citizens of that city must have made a deep impression on the Soviets.

The Kennedy visit took place in the summer, 1963. He stopped at Cologne first, where he visited the Cathedral. I remember that the head of the White House Communications detail—an Army major—had set up telephones in the Cathedral. I asked whether it was true that a phone had been placed in the pew behind the President. He told me that it was only half true; in fact, two phones had been placed there. In fact, all of Germany was wired with White House telephones. That was just further evidence of the major effort that was undertaken to support that Presidential trip. I don't believe that there were very many substantive issues to be discussed between the President and the Chancellor. The trip was primarily a campaign such as an American candidate engages in every four years in the US. Kennedy was there to win “the hearts and minds” of the German people and to boost their morale. So all the preparations were comparable to a campaign swing, only on a much larger and grandiose scale. It was just extraordinary. Every detail of Kennedy's appearances were discussed at great length; all the scenarios were elaborately worked out—all intended to make the best possible impression that could be staged.

“Ich bin ein Berliner”—the famous remark that Kennedy made in Berlin—was the culmination of his visit to Germany and was so designed. A million Germans in the Rathaus Square heard him and it was certainly the pinnacle of a very successful public relations trip.

The advance work, as I said, was meticulous. The advance party and that group that came with Kennedy was large, and I think this was the first Presidential visit on that scale and that subsequent ones became increasingly demanding and refined. The Reagan visit to Korea, which I managed for the Embassy many years later, was on a grand scale, but the Kennedy trip to Germany became the model for subsequent Presidential forays. All of the Kennedy stops went through “dry runs” to insure a minimum potential for inadvertent mistakes. I understand the Kennedy political campaign became the model for subsequent domestic political campaigns; in the same way, his trip to Germany set the standards for

subsequent Presidential foreign visits. I can remember Reagan's advance team members telling me in 1983(?) that Kennedy had redefined Presidential visits.

The guide for the press for the German trip was 250 pages long. It was very detailed, with each event described, second by second. I had a chance to personally observe Kennedy in action. I was in the anteroom for that dinner that Alan Lee spent so much time arranging. I saw Kennedy sitting in his special chair which was intended to ease his back problems. Unfortunately, I did not go to Berlin to hear his famous speech. I saw McGeorge Bundy, Richard Goodwin and other staff members. I got into the middle of a McGeorge Bundy-Goodwin spat because I happened to be the carrier of a speech draft that was being shuttled between the two. I delivered the speech to Goodwin, who took one brief glance at it and threw it into the wastepaper basket with an expletive.

We managed to see a good deal of Germany in our two years there. I had been there before in the Air Force. Quincy Lundsen, an A-100 classmate who was in the Economic Section, and his wife and the Clevelands used to spend most weekends castle-hopping and sightseeing.

The physical change between my two tours in Germany was obvious. During my first tour, there was still evidence in downtown Munich of air raids. (The German mark then (1956) was still at an exchange rate that enabled me as a first lieutenant to live better than all but a few Germans. We lived well even on our modest salary.) But by 1956-57, the Germans were already hard at work reconstructing their country. I remember traveling down to Munich on the train from Bremerhaven during the middle of the night and observing Germans rebuilding their houses under flashlight. They had worked all day and then returned home to fix their war torn houses. By the time I came to Germany the second time, there was very little war destruction still evident. The German standard of living was still modest, but their spirits were high. They were convivial and slowly but surely they were making progress. In the early 1960s, I was very interested in car racing and therefore saw the Nurbergring races.

As I have stated, the Germans were as concerned as we were about the Soviets. I don't remember that any of us thought that WWIII was about to break out or that we experienced any major crisis as arose during the airlift or the construction of the Wall. But I think here was always an underlying concern about what the Soviets might do, accompanied by a determination to stand fast against any encroachments of the rights spelled out by international treaties. There was a lot of “steadfastness,” and I think everybody was wary of possible “salami” tactics—i.e. cutting back on treaty rights, however small, here and there. We and the Germans had the sense that we would stand together and be firm.

McGhee, as I said, spoke little if any German. But I did not interpret for him. He used either the interpreter of the official with whom he was speaking or someone from the Political Section, where we had some excellent German speaking officers. I myself continued to study German every day for an hour. I used it when I traveled through the country. I could go to an all-German party and socialize in German; I could certainly understand 75-80% even when the conversations went beyond the “small talk.” If I had had an opportunity to use it in my official duties, I probably would have learned a lot more. For some reason or other, I could never read it as well as I could speak it; I used to read the “Frankfurter Allgemeine”, one of Germany's leading newspapers. I read that more than others because I seemed to find it simpler in its writing style. This was all for my own benefit however, not for the Ambassador. I worked primarily on his trip schedules, visits, etc. and supervised the two protocol secretaries. That was enough!

I think it was less than a year after I arrived that Adenauer retired. My most vivid memory of the “Old Man” was one night when I tried to cross the Rhine on a ferry. Adenauer lived across the river from Bonn and had to cross it on a ferry. When he went back and forth, of course, he was always escorted by a police escort—both motorcycles and cars. This entourage getting on one of those ferries was quite impressive. As I remember it, by the

time the Chancellor and his escorts got on, there wasn't room for the rest of us; we had to wait for the next one. I thought: Well, he deserves all that. A great man, der Alte.

In closing, I should say that I enjoyed my two years in Germany, but it was a painful job experience in which I did not perform as well as I had hoped to, although circumstances were not quite propitious. I did not leave a very good impression on the Washington staff. Elwood Williams, who was the “father” of the “German club” was not very helpful when it came to helping me with my next assignment. I think by the end of my two years, Williams was anxious to have me replaced and found Peter Semler, a college classmate, to become McGhee's special assistant. Peter was the second of five officers who served as McGhee's aides in the five years he was Ambassador in Bonn.

Some years later, George McGhee hosted a party at his house in Georgetown to which he invited all of his former Embassy staffers. I felt rather badly because I accepted and actually went; I should have refused; but I was too polite, I guess. But I did see all my successors and many of my colleagues from the Bonn days.

Q: In 1964, you were assigned to the Fletcher School. How did that happen?

CLEVELAND: It was at my request. I had for some time asked to be sent to graduate studies to enhance my economic analysis skill. I felt that if my career were to follow an economic course, I needed a better academic foundation. My request, I think, made it easier for McGhee to ease me out of Bonn to be replaced by Semler. I left Bonn in the summer of 1964.

I was at Fletcher for the academic year 1964-65. The choice of Fletcher was the Department's. The FSI officer in charge of economic training said to me, when we first met, that I was not much of an officer and that he certainly would not have chosen me for this advanced economic training. He added that he had been requested to accept me and that he had prevailed on Fletcher to take me. He had picked Fletcher because he thought it was the least demanding economic training available—no statistics, no

modeling, etc. Before sending us future students of economics off to various universities, FSI put us through a month long preparatory course—at which I did very well according to the instructor.

I must say that the thought of going off to training after a bad efficiency report—which, according to Foreign Service gossip is a very bad idea—never entered my head. I was so happy to leave McGhee that I really wasn't worried about the potential impact of training on my career. Furthermore, I looked forward to returning to the academic world. I had done well going to Georgetown in the evenings and I think I felt that a year at Fletcher would be good for my self-esteem. I believed that a year's training in economics would be rewarding, both intellectually and career wise. The choice was between a year at a university or a year in language and area study, which was the customary choice then for officers at my grade level. I came down on the side of the university.

The whole family moved to Wayland, MA—a little past Wellesley, near Lincoln. It was a very nice community where we rented a little house. We enjoyed the year, away from job pressures.

I found Fletcher immensely useful. FSOs Herb Horowitz and Charlie York were also there. Burt Levin and Don Born were at Harvard, but all of us Foreign Service officers would get together and became friends. There were some military officers at Fletcher whom we got to know. I worked very hard—harder than I had at any university. For the first time in my life, I went to my “job” at 8 a.m. and studied until 6 p.m. every day without a break. Rarely did I take any work home at night; sometimes I would work on a weekend in preparation for exams, for example. I put myself on a very disciplined track which I think was in part responsible for my learning a lot. I did well and was very satisfied with my experience at Fletcher. I found it personally very satisfying. My confidence was rebuilt because I found out that I could survive in a tough intellectual atmosphere.

I learned a lot about economics, but the course I remember the best was on European diplomatic history—1815 to present. I wanted that course so that I could get an M.A. I took six semester courses in economics—economic development, national income theory, international trade—and three in diplomatic history. I got an A in the history course—the first such high mark ever given by that Professor—but I did spend a lot of time on it. I think that diplomatic history course stood me in good stead for the rest of my Foreign Service career, not in terms of applying any specific lessons, but as useful background to some of the issues that confronted me. The 19th Century—Bismarck and Metternich—is a very useful period to study for any diplomat, even if the structure which these statesmen worked so hard to build fell apart after their deaths.

The lessons learned in the economic course were also useful, especially since my career at that stage had not yet developed well and the future was still somewhat cloudy. As I said before, the year was very important in the rebuilding of my self-confidence and I left Fletcher feeling much better about myself than I had when I entered. I was reinvigorated, refreshed and ready for Jakarta which was to be my next assignment.

I must say that the FSI “shepherd”—Jacques Reinstein—was mystified by my interest in Jakarta. He pointed out that there were “no statistics” in Indonesia; there were no numbers to “crunch”. It never occurred me that that was an important ingredient for economic analysis. I had become comfortable with economics at Fletcher, at least as a “generalist” in the field. I had acquired enough academic background to permit me to do the job in Jakarta without any great difficulties. I was comfortable with economic concepts and ideas. I never could—nor would I want to necessarily—be able to analyze statistical balances of payment or national incomes or gross domestic products. I found that I never really wanted that kind of expertise.

After the Fletcher year, I headed back to Asia where I stayed for the rest of my Foreign Service career. I think that opportunities for a young FSO, then and now, were far greater in Asia than in places like Bonn, although my view may be skewed by my unfortunate

experience with McGhee. I could work on issues in Asia that officers two grades higher were handling in Germany. Fletcher was a marvelous experience enhanced by the birth of our fourth child, Peter.

Q: In 1965, you were assigned to Jakarta as an economic officer. Was that at your request?

CLEVELAND: In light of my experience in Germany and at Fletcher, I wanted to a) not be reassigned to Germany or to any European post; b) be assigned to East Asia; and c) to be assigned to a position in an economic section. Personnel gave me a list of upcoming vacancies that met my criteria, from which I chose the job in Jakarta. I could have gone to Seoul; as I said before, Reinstein thought I was crazy to go to Jakarta where they "didn't have any statistics." I chose Jakarta because unlike Seoul, the other possibility, the American Embassy staff did not live in a compound, but lived in rented quarters in various parts of the city. I had had enough "compound living" in Bonn; I wanted to experience living among the local population. But I had never seen Jakarta—perhaps fortuitously.

In fact, the Embassy did rent us a small house in one of Jakarta's nice residential neighborhoods—Kabeiren. The house was right near a mosque from which prayers were broadcast at 5 a.m. every morning. We became friendly with some of our Indonesian neighbors. Four or five weeks after the military coup occurred in late September, 1965, we had six or seven tanks parked in a field right next to our house. They were there essentially as a watchdog for the neighborhood. We thought that the tanks would be gone in matter of days; in fact they remained for two or three years. It didn't take us long before we began to provide laundry service to the tank crews, as well as some food and other basics. The maids in our house provided entertainment to the troops that was becoming quite disruptive. So rather than complain to the command, we invited the whole tank squad into the house for a big party. We become well acquainted and they became wonderful neighbors for the years they stayed in that field. The tank men were extremely polite and very nice and we enjoyed getting to know them. It is not a practice that I would necessarily

recommend for everybody, but it worked well for us. Our kids every once in a while got to ride in the tanks. Those tanks would periodically patrol the narrow streets on which we lived, knocking down trees indiscriminately. Sometimes the kids would be on board during these forays.

Howard Jones was the Ambassador in the early "60s, but he was already gone by the time we arrived. He was succeeded by Marshall Green. The DCM was Frank Galbraith, who soon left to be our Ambassador in Singapore and was replaced by Jack Lydman. The Economic Counselor was Perry Ellis, who left soon after we arrived to be replaced by Paul McCusker. There was one person USIS and a very small trace still left of the 1950s and early "60s assistance program. We had had a huge AID mission, but it was for all intents and purposes thrown out of the country by Sukarno. It was not until the coup several months after my arrival that we resurrected the AID program and rebuilt the AID mission. It was done on a much more modest level than had been true before, however.

The Economic Section consisted of four officers—Paul, Gordon Donald, Malcolm Churchill—the most junior—and myself. Later Joe Havary was added as a Commercial Attach#. Initially, my specific responsibilities were to report on oil and mining. My first six months were almost exclusively devoted to oil, because the two big American companies—CALTEX, STANVAC—had made large investments in Indonesia and were being threatened with seizure. Later, my portfolio expanded to other parts of the Indonesian economy, such as communications, which also became a major area for US investment, aviation and Indonesian manufacturing. In fact, I came to cover the supply side of the economy—one of the country's first “supply siders.” And consequently my job eventually turned into an advisory service for potential American investors, who began to look at Indonesia as a possible base for investing, starting in early 1966.

When Suharto came in, the pressures to throw out the two big American oil companies eased. So I turned to helping some 56 American oil companies over the next two years, as best I could, as they tried to get into exploration for oil. The addition of the Commercial

Attach# didn't decrease my work load. Joe Havary was a terrific guy and we just worked together in all areas; there was so much to do that there was never any time to worry about who was doing what; we worked as a team. I specialized in oil and mining matters plus aviation and communications, because I had spent so much time on them before Joe arrived. But, as I said, there was more than enough to do and the two of us never stumbled over each other. Paul McCusker personally handled some of the larger deals—Freeport Sulfur's investment, for example. After the coup and with Suharto's accession to power, the business climate in Indonesia turned positive attracting many foreign investors, including American. We believed that it was in our interest to have the Indonesians develop their economy. They had some very fine economists, known as the “Berkeley Mafia” because they had gotten their education at the University of California. The chief of this group was Widjojo; there was Emil Salim and Ali Wardhana, Sadli, plus several others. This group had been advisors to the Indonesian military before the coup. They had convinced Suharto and the other generals that economic development was crucial to Indonesia. When the military took power and overthrew Sukarno, this group of economists became pivotal in the new government. They continue to be influential to this day.

The Embassy, after the coup, was definitely pushing US investment, not only because we thought it would be good for American companies, but because we too viewed Indonesian economic development as essential to political stability and growth. As I said, we restarted an assistance program, but with a much lower profile than had existed in earlier years. Marshall Green, after taking over as Ambassador, developed the concept of helping the Indonesians through our AID program to help themselves. In earlier years, we had just poured money and American technicians into Indonesia to run development projects; we were of course trying to assist indigenous economic development; but we were essentially doing all the work and the Indonesians gained little. Green's view was that the Indonesians should develop and manage the economic development programs and projects themselves. We would provide such assistance as was appropriate, but

we stayed in the background primarily. Included of course in the range of economic assistance was US private investment.

There were areas in which our investors were in competition with other foreigners. We in the Embassy promoted American firms. If there was more than one American company interested in the same activity, we promoted all.

There wasn't any promotion in the oil area. There was no need. We provided advice to interested American firms; we briefed as thoroughly as we could on how things operated in Indonesian oil and suggested various approaches depending on the nature of their interests. I told each of the 56 oil representatives that I saw during my tour that I would tell them all I knew, but that they would come to know a lot more than I very soon as they began their negotiations with the Indonesians. I only asked that they keep me informed of their progress or lack thereof. That arrangement worked out well and I developed close relations with many American oil people, enabling me to report a pretty accurate picture of the Indonesian oil business for the rest of my tour. This was important stuff to understand. There was a tremendous amount of investment that was made in the Indonesian oil provinces; earnings from oil exploration and production became the major foreign exchange return for the country. This has lasted until today.

Ironically the Dutch, and particularly Dutch Royal Shell which I believe was the first discoverer of Indonesian oil, decided not to compete for new exploration, even as Suharto came to power. That was a very curious development because Dutch Shell had major interests in Indonesian Borneo. It also had a 145 mile long pipeline in that area, but just as Suharto took power, the Dutch gave up and did not compete for any other exploration rights. It was true that they had found possible oil field in Sarawak and Sabah and they may have calculated that that was as much as they could handle. They left the fields outside of Borneo to other explorers. Perhaps they felt that they could not compete politically with other foreigners; I don't know the reasons. We found the Dutch reticence intriguing and I wrote a number of reports on that surprising development. I suspect that

by 1965, Royal Dutch Shell may simply have been fed up with Indonesia. They had been treated very badly by Sukarno, as had others, but I think the Dutch may have reached the outer limits of their tolerance before the other foreigners did. They therefore missed the golden days of oil exploration.

As I said, there was no shortage of American interest. Our companies became the dominant oil producers in Indonesia. CALTEX had been in Indonesia for long time—even before WWII. By the mid 1960s it had known reserves in excess of 10-12 billion barrels, which is huge. Almost all of it was in Sumatra. STANVAC had smaller operations, but later found major gas fields as well as other oil fields. These American companies were well established in Indonesia and knew all the players well. They had done their homework—geology—well, but the first real exploration after Suharto's rise to power was really done by small American exploration companies with relatively small amounts to invest. The first company that I can remember that was successful was the Independent Indonesian-American Petroleum Company (IIAPCO). The local representative—Don Todd—of that company became a good friend. He was a geologist who felt that Indonesia had a huge oil base; this was almost an emotional belief. He had begun to negotiate for exploration rights in 1963—before Sukarno began pressuring the oil companies. In 1966 he finally negotiated a production sharing contract—the first of its kind in Indonesia, or perhaps in the world.

Todd understood the Indonesians and they respected him. To some oil companies on the other hand, Todd reinforced their unhappiness with the new contracts that were being negotiated. The old contracts, which had been negotiated by the large firms, included such provisions as a 50/50 split of the profits after tax and royalty. These contracts were very profitable for both sides. But the smaller companies were willing to divide the oil at the well on a basis more favorable to the Indonesians. In return, the Indonesians would then have to market the crude.

In many respects, these new contracts were more favorable to Indonesia and were becoming a threat to those signed by the large companies. Caltex and Stanvac would come to the Embassy and tell us their concerns; they never asked us to intervene directly—nor would we have come between the Indonesian government and the small oil explorers; It would have meant that we would be favoring one American oil company over another. We used to give everyone our best advice, but we told them negotiations with the Indonesians were their problem, not ours. The situation was not unusual in the oil exploration industry world-wide. Armand Hammer, as head of Occidental Petroleum, had broken some of the standard contracts that the majors had negotiated in the Middle East. The same thing happened in Indonesia; a smaller American company submitted a contract that was somewhat better for the Indonesians which broke that pattern established by the majors many years before. Todd may very well have counseled the newcomers on his production sharing contract, which over time became the model for subsequent contracts for all oil companies—large and small—doing business in Indonesia. The history of the oil industry has basically been one of a continuing diminishing advantage that the big firms had initially built into their contracts. The increasing benefits to the host countries was repeatedly met with strong protests from the majors who held the position, year after year, that the new provisions would make exploration and exploitation of the oil fields unprofitable. As far as I know, however, no major oil company ever went broke even under new contract provisions!

The second largest investment opportunity for foreign investors in Indonesia in the mid-1960s was mining. Indonesia is immensely rich in natural resources. Foreign investors offered opportunities in the mineral area which were financially very attractive to Indonesia. They brought extraction processes that had the advance technology the Indonesians didn't have. So the foreign investment focus on the mineral extraction industry made eminent sense for the Indonesian economy, which their experts and ours readily perceived.

As in most such situations, there was some resentment about foreigners coming into Indonesia to pull out “their birthright”. I don't think the Indonesians were unique in this matter; this resentment, whether virulent or just under the surface, has been known to exist in many parts of the world. But, despite Sukarno's departure from the scene, the Suharto regime was not exactly a model of democracy as we know it; the country was still under tight central control. When the government reached a decision that some activity was in the national interest, there was not much opportunity for other point of views. I am pretty sure that there was resentment in the population; we used to hear complaints about some of the new ventures from the opposition. But there was no vocal public outcry about mineral exploration. The Army was in control then as it is still today. And that was that.

Let me just speak a little about the coup—Gerakan Tigah Puluh, on the 30th of September. I arrived in Indonesia at the beginning of July, 1965. At the time, the US was apparently more disliked in Indonesia than almost anywhere in the world. Whether this was a deeply felt popular view or whether it was imposed from the top, I can not say. As in most countries, the Indonesians took their cues from the political leadership; the population followed whatever winds were favorable to them. That was not unusual; we find obedient populations in many parts of the world. The anti-American feeling was undoubtedly whipped up by certain leadership groups, as the pro-American sentiment which surfaced after the coup was encouraged by the new leadership. In fact, I think the Indonesian masses were probably far more concerned about their personal economic problems than the political whims of the leadership, which they followed as the safest path.

In any event, the Embassy was daily pelted with stones in the summer of 1965. The Chancery was next door to the State House where Subandrio, the Foreign Minister, would hold forth in his demagogic way about the evils of the US. The crowd would then march next door and throw stones at the Chancery. Marshall Green used to have a couple of dirty old rocks and some slick marble pieces on his coffee table, which he would show visitors. The marble pieces had been thrown when Howard Jones was the Ambassador. Marshall

would report; the rocks had been thrown through his own windows. Marshall used to point to the differences as an indicator on how the Indonesian economy had deteriorated!

So our initial year in Jakarta was scary or exciting depending on your perspective. I was still a novice and thought that those days were fascinating. But Sukarno took every opportunity to paint us as devils. The atmosphere was so tense that we didn't have much contact with Indonesians, either because they had been ordered not have any contacts with the Americans or because they were afraid to do so. That was frustrating, because, as I said earlier, I was anxious to become better acquainted with foreigners. So the first year in Jakarta was not very rewarding from that point of view; only a couple of Indonesian were brave enough to sustain contact.

The immediate events of September 30, 1965 and the days after were extraordinarily interesting to me, and remain so to this day, even though I was not a political officer then. I did not have any forewarning of what might happen on September 30. Although some of the higher echelons in the Embassy may well have, I believe that there was general surprise that a coup was taking place. It took the Embassy a while to put all the pieces together. The first I personally heard of it was when I entered the Chancery lobby early the morning after. Bob Rigney, the Assistant Air Attach# and a friend, was there explaining to people that he had heard shots behind his house which was very close to the residence of the Chief of the Air Force. Others in the lobby had also heard unusual sounds. Over the period of the next couple of hours, all sorts of reports began to filter in—generals having been abducted, Nasution—the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs—escaping from the back of his house.

Eventually it became clear that the communists, probably in cahoots with Sukarno, had tried to overthrow the Army and kill its leadership. They did in fact kill seven of the top generals, but did not catch General Suharto. At the time, Suharto was commanding a division in Bandung. After the attempted overthrow, he rallied his troops and moved them to Jakarta. He set up headquarters on the west side Merdeka Square; Sukarno's people

were on the east side of the square; the Presidential Palace was on the north side. The American Embassy was (and is) on the square as well—on the south. The feuding parties began their negotiations around the square. Suharto had taken control of the radio station on the first night, so that the news to the population was obviously one-sided. In any case, the negotiations began virtually under our noses. That was a fascinating experience.

At no time during this tense period, was our access to the Chancery impeded that I recall. We kept our normal working hours—early morning to late at night. On the morning of the first day, of course, Suharto was not anywhere near Jakarta; it was only later that fighting began around the communication facilities in the center of Jakarta. I think I personally was naive and simply felt a sense of excitement stemming from the rapidly changing situation; I had no sense of personal danger, although we all recognized that the course of coups was unpredictable. I went down to Glodok, the Chinese quarters, a day or two after the coup started. I was startled and impressed by how the quarter had been festooned with red banners; they hung everywhere. I had not been anywhere before where communism had shown such a public face. It was a worrisome sight. The flags did not stay up long however. As soon as Suharto moved into Jakarta, the communists disappeared. Throughout, the Embassy people moved around the city pretty much at will; we attended the funeral for the assassinated generals and other public events. In fact, I don't think it took the Army very long to reestablish its control; the funeral was a major political event indicating the reassertion of Army control.

After Suharto and the Army reestablished control, a greater measure of calm returned to Jakarta. In early October, all the Embassy dependents were evacuated as a precautionary move. Carter and our four children went to Australia, from whence I retrieved them in April, 1966, after spending a couple of weeks there myself, seeing lots of old friends. The evacuation went as well as could be expected. We used commercial transportation primarily. October 1965 in Indonesia was not a time of great concern for our lives, as I have suggested earlier. It was not like other places which we had to evacuate when American lives were in imminent danger. There were tensions, worries and concerns, but

I don't think I felt that my own life was in great peril. As a mater of fact, Marshall Green did not want the families evacuated. He did not see threats aimed at Americans; it was the Chinese and Communist Indonesians who were “under the gun”. Many of them were killed, although an accurate account has never been published, nor will there ever be one. So Marshall argued for keeping families in Jakarta, primarily as a morale boost for the employees. But the Department asked whether the Embassy could “guarantee the safety” of the Americans—primarily official families, since there weren't many private American citizens in Indonesia. That of course was impossible, and therefore the families were evacuated. They went to Singapore and Bangkok and eventually most went to the US.

As exciting as the political events were, I remained professionally deeply involved in oil issues, trying to resolve problems that CALTEX and STANVAC faced. I was also following the doings of Royal Dutch Shell. Of course, my colleagues in the Political Section kept me abreast of the major political developments, but I was absorbed by my own work. One of the reasons why the American Embassy was so deeply involved in existing and potential American investments was necessity. By late 1965, there were no other American institutions left in Indonesia—no American banks, no corporations, no American Chamber of Commerce. Only a few Americans who were working for the existing oil companies were left in Indonesia. And the Embassy. We had to work and help.

I should say that it was not immediately clear after the coup that Suharto and his cohorts were going to be any friendlier to the American oil companies than their predecessors had been. But I was charged to do my best to help the oil companies to “stay in the game.” We should remember that the events of September 30 and the days that followed are best described as a “rolling” coup. Sukarno was not immediately thrown out as President. Many of the bureaucrats that had been appointed by Sukarno remained in their jobs. Suharto's final political victory was still many months away, so that it was not clear to any of us how this struggle would eventually end.

It soon became increasingly clear to Marshall Green and the Embassy political officers that Suharto was winning the battle, but it was not until a few months after September 30, that Suharto—I think with Green's encouragement—decided that the American oil companies and American investment and aid were necessary to Indonesia's development. So there was a hiatus of several months during which the oil companies were not sure of their future. We felt from the beginning of Suharto's influence that the American trained economists would see the benefits of US investment and had high hopes that they would swing Suharto and his entourage to their point o view. But, as I said, it was three or four months, December 1965 I believe, before Suharto finally reached that decision. The top echelons of the Embassy were certainly pushing the value of US aid and investment.

The Embassy of course welcomed the change from Sukarno to Suharto. The former—and his cohorts—had been as difficult a leader as we had to contend with around the world. We had been greatly concerned abut Indonesia going communist. That would have been a real blow to us in the mid-1960s as we were entering into our major effort in Vietnam. So Indonesia was viewed as a very central if lower profile issue in the struggle between communism and free world. The Suharto victory was received with great relief. Our relationship with Indonesia took a 180% turn. After the end of 1965, we had access to Indonesians, thereby enabling us to better assess both economic and political developments and to engage effectively. Also the country began to open up, particularly after the limitation on diplomatic travel was lifted in April, 1966. That enabled Bob Rigney to be the first to travel out of Jakarta. Dick Howland and I were the second pair out. We traveled all across Java from Jakarta to Surabaya and back by car.

Gradually the attitude of the Indonesian bureaucrats changed. Gordon Donald, the number two officer in our Economic Section, knew the “Berkeley Mafia.” One day he told me he wanted to introduce me to an Indonesian friend. He took me to a house near the Embassy; there, on the porch, sat a white haired man, nevertheless rather young, who turned out to be Widjojo. I left that conversation impressed by the man's intellect and rationality—until

then, I had not met many “rational” Indonesians. So we knew that if the “Berkeley Mafia” could be put in positions of influence, that among other things American investments would be welcomed. And that is in fact what happened. By the end of 1965 or early 1966, Suharto made the decision to allow the oil companies to stay. It was a welcome decision because the American oil people, with whom I met constantly during this hiatus, were understandably quite nervous. As I said, the Americans decided to stay; the Dutch decided to leave.

I have to underscore that there was considerable difference between our efforts to keep the American oil companies in Indonesia and our efforts to bring new ones in. For the first six months of my tour, I devoted all my attention to helping the existing American oil companies in Indonesia. The following two and a half years of my assignment were devoted increasingly to new investments. I think new oil companies seeing what the experience of CALTEX and STANVAC had been decided to try their luck in Indonesia; we made no effort to attract new investments, but as I said, there was a steady stream of interest starting in the Spring, 1966 and for the next few years. Don Todd was my first new customer; he was followed by Bryan Ebee, an older man, who had been an employee of US Shell for many years, oddly enough. When he came to see me, it was, I believe, as the representative of ZAPATA—a large off-shore platform builder—in which George Bush had an interest. Then came a steady stream—UNION and CONOCO, etc—all looking for oil. I guess the word was getting around in the oil circles that Indonesia was the place to be. Indonesia had been a major oil producer even before WWII and the only thing that had kept it from really prospering after the war was the political situation. There was never any doubts that oil could be found in the archipelago. The same thing could be said for mining prospects. The availability of ore was never questioned; only the country's political stability and attitude towards foreign investment were in doubt.

Starting in the late Spring 1966, all kinds of Americans began to trickle into Indonesia. They came in increasing numbers. It became a subject for discussion in the Embassy because we had come to the conclusion that almost every kind of American was beginning

to come to Indonesia—Bunker Hunt, Roy Huffington and other Presidents of major US corporations. I met some of them in my office and some in Paul McCusker's office. But then there were the adventurers and con men. Some caused us some trouble. One for example was named John F. Kennedy, if you can believe that. He insisted to all Indonesians who would listen that he was a close relative of the former President. He built a fairly large structure—an office building that he was putting up on spec—across from the Hotel Indonesia. It was about half way up before the Indonesians found out that he was a complete fraud and perhaps even a criminal. As the Indonesians began to close in on him, he suddenly disappeared. The building stayed half erected for many years. So we had a large number of unsavory characters trying to make their fortune in Indonesia. They misled the Indonesians and certainly did nothing to enhance American reputation.

The biggest single incident of that kind of fraud in which I was personally involved did not concern an American. A major bidding war took place in 1967 among several companies for the rights to mine the lateritic nickel deposits in Sulawesi—an immense deposit. Among the bidders were: International Nickel, headquartered in NY, although registered as a Canadian company; Kaiser Nickel—a French-American joint venture; and Sumitomo. Japanese. In the course of that bidding, Kaiser raised questions about the propriety of the Embassy's role in the process. It believed that we were supporting International Nickel, which was not true. I told Tom Singer, from Kaiser, that I would offer him exactly the same advice and assistance that I would somebody from International Nickel, which was more than # owned by Americans. And in fact I did. The fact was that Phil Jessup and Bill Bell of INCO showed up ten times as often as Singer did, which may have made it seem that we were leaning towards INCO.

The competition was decided at technical levels by the Ministry of Mines in favor of INCO. Then the real battle began. I didn't realize what was about to happen, being rather new at this game. Kaiser-Nickel offered to build some projects—waterworks, etc—as political bribes, if the political decision makers would reverse the technicians. Bell went to the Canadian Ambassador—Olivier—who was absolutely no help, although INCO was really

a Canadian company. One evening, Bell came to see me, quite upset with the French for trying to win the bid with bribes. I suggested that we go see Marshall Green, which we did at his Residence. Bill Bell explained the situation as he saw it. Marshall became as angry as he ever got. When asked what he should do, we advised him to see the Indonesian government officials, which he did. He went to see Sudomo Umardani, a key military officer with direct access to Suharto.

This bid for mineral exploration rights was essentially the first large contract that the new Suharto government was going to sign. It was worth $1 billion approximately, which in 1967 was a huge amount. Marshall told Umardani that if the technical level decision were overturned, it could cast a long shadow over any future investment considerations which would be a real set back for Indonesia. Marshall's strong argument took Umardani by surprise. His representations were duplicated by the Economic Section; we all went to our contacts with the same argument. All our arguments, but mostly Marshall Green's of course, I think helped carry the day. The Indonesian leadership upheld the technical findings and recommendations, and INCO won the contract.

The Kaiser people then went to the State Department and complained vigorously about the Embassy and its involvement in a “private” matter, but there really weren't grounds for their complaints. If anything, Kaiser should have been berated for trying to win a contract by bribery. We weren't taking sides. All we were really doing was defending the decision that the technical levels had reached; it would have been a real blow to Indonesia had the decision gone in another direction. We were defending the integrity of the bidding process so that future potential investors would not be concerned by any hanky-panky and could feel comfortable investing in Indonesia. It was very important that the Indonesians understand the importance of the perception of an honest bidding process to the future of investment in their country. I am not sure they necessarily remembered the lesson forever, or even for long, but at least in this case, the final judgement was technically and ethnically defensible.

I suspect that even in those days, French companies were making “under the table” offers. The waterworks offer to Makassar was clearly a political bribe—if not a cash one—because the Trade Minister would have been the beneficiary of the project that the French were willing to build in his district. And he was one of the key decision makers on the nickel project. Bribery was rampant during Sukarno's regime. I don't really know whether the new military (Suharto) government reduced that kind of activity; it may have but it is very hard to document. But it was always assumed that a certain amount of bribery was taking place. Paul McCusker had a close friend, Vladimir Gold—a Czech/American—who was close to the Indonesian Central Bank's President. Vladimir had extensive knowledge of bribes which he used to report to us—except (I assume) for any amounts that he himself might have skimmed off. So in general we had a pretty good general picture of “the under the table” activities taking place in Indonesia. But I am not sure that during this early period, bribery was an overwhelming factor in commercial transactions. Someone who had been in Korea thought the Indonesians were minor league compared to the Koreans. I don't believe that bribery in Indonesia was out of line from that taking place in East Asia in general, where that type of activity is much more part of the culture than it is in the West.

The oil area, which took much of my time, also undoubtedly included bribery, but there was also much more irregular activity than that involved. This was an important situation which colored a lot of foreign investment in Indonesia. General Ibnu Sutowo was in charge of Indonesia's oil activities. He reported directly to Suharto. I was warned about Sutowo by some of my Indonesian contacts. From the day he was appointed, he began to make himself an independent political/economic power and built his own fiefdom, which we thoroughly reported to Washington. PERTAMINA—the Indonesian government oil company that he led—hired bodyguards with the uniforms and equipment of a regular army. He built a civilian “air force” of considerable magnitude which he used to fly people all over the country. At a later stage, he began to try to acquire some old tankers from the Dutch—which would have given him a small army, air force and navy as well. He became very powerful. He did not, I was told by American oil men, solicit payments personally.

He established an insurance company in Hong Kong. If any oil company wanted to do business in Indonesia, it had to buy insurance from this Hong Kong company. That was a very lucrative business, but that was apparently only one of his ancillary industries. Needless to say, Ibnu Sutowo became extraordinarily wealthy and an independent political power. It was no news to the Indonesians economists that this was happening; it was a concern to them because they understood that the major foreign exchange earner for Indonesia was the oil business which was controlled by Ibnu, reporting directly to Suharto. That is not a process with which a professional economist is comfortable. Ibnu was probably completely unconcerned by the macroeconomic impact of his empire. I must say that it was the general perception that much of PERMTAMINA's profits were being channeled through the Army into the economic development of Indonesia, but it was not a process that was under the control of anyone but Ibnu and Suharto. I used to discuss these issues with reporters like Bob Keatley of the “Wall Street Journal” and he wrote some reports on these Indonesian practices.

I was professionally concerned about this informal process as well as other schemes that grew up as foreign investment in Indonesia poured in. Long after I left, Ibnu Sutowo overplayed his hand and was fired by Suharto. At the time I was there, my advice to Marshall Green was to avoid Ibnu Sutowo. He was not a savory person with whom the American Ambassador should be associated, in my view, even if he was a forceful and effective manager. His personal aggrandizement was not the model that we should have encouraged in Indonesia by being seen with him. Marshall never did. I must say that after 1968, Ambassador Frank Galbraith and Colonel George Benson of the MAAG did have contacts with Sutowo; I thought that was unfortunate, but it was probably more realistic.

I am not sure that PERTAMINA was unique; there were probably other industrial power centers developing, such as the tin mining business, etc. Most likely, each of these major ore extracting business had one Indonesian “shepherd” who took advantage of the

opportunity to help himself. But Ibnu Sutowo was I think the leader of the pack...because oil was so big.

Before making further comments, I should point out at this stage of my career that I was pretty callow. I had finished my apprenticeship in the Foreign Service—with some rough spots that I have described. My assignment to Indonesia was that of a journeyman reporting officer; I was learning my craft in Jakarta, and I think I was coming along. I still had some idealism in me, however. What I found in Indonesia—the empires built by people like Ibnu Sutowo, the corruption, the inefficiencies—always took me somewhat by surprise. I don't know what I expected, but much of what I saw in Indonesia was an eye-opener.

This was my first assignment to a country under a military dictatorship. That was also novel to me. Marshall Green was instrumental in shaping my views on issues such as that which I hold still. Marshall's view was that the first generation of Southeast Asia leaders, like Sukarno, had been nationalists whose goals were the establishment of independent nations. Sukarno must be given credit for achieving Indonesia's independence from Holland and for forming one nation out of a number of disparate islands. But his political agenda did not include economic development; few if any of the first generation Southeast Asia leaders had given much thought beyond independence.

Economic development was left to the second generation of leadership. That required qualified technocrats and in Indonesia's case, it was fortunate enough to have them. It was the technocrats who were able to look to the long range future and were able to develop their plans unencumbered by the exigencies of the moment. In Indonesia, these technocrats included the generals, who had become engineers and builders and who had been smart enough to surround themselves with people, like Widjojo and the “Berkeley Mafia.” They had heard these economists at their War College in Bandung, and when the generals came to power, they quickly brought these economists into posts of influence.

Even generals like Ibnu, despite his personal predilection, was a great manager and used the economists to maximize the exploitation of oil for the benefit of his country.

We understood that the military was not forming democratic institutions, but with their focus on economic development there is no doubt in my mind that Indonesia needed Suharto and those generals at that stage of the country's development. A military, with an appreciation of the importance of economic development, can be useful to that process in a Third World country. I think that in the late 20th Century, some countries need strong central control to marshall their human resources—bureaucracy, industry, farmers, etc—to foster as rapid development as possible. I think it is not appropriate to measure Third World development against the earlier experiences of Europe and the US. They developed in different times and places. The US did not have examples outside its geographic area which could be used as models of development. The Industrial Revolution was native to England and Western Europe; the opening of the West was native to the US. We developed on our own—albeit more slowly.

That is not true of the Third World today. The countries of Africa and Asia have the West and the US helping them to move ahead in order to close the economic gap between North and South. Furthermore, the populations of the Third World have access to the economically developed world and have a model which they wish to emulate as rapidly as possible. I suggest that these Third World countries can afford to achieve rapid economic development even at the cost of some political freedom. The direction provided by strong central governments is most likely the avenue which will accelerate economic development the most. This trade-off—repression in exchange for hopes of a rapidly rising standard of living—is not always, in all cases, desirable, but I think many of the Third World populations feel that the short term pain is worth it if the long range economic gains are realized. I ran into this dilemma in Korea later on, where I think the trade-off was consciously and correctly made by the Koreans.

The debate about Sukarno's dictatorship in the Embassy in Jakarta was quite acute before I arrived in 1965. By the time Marshall Green took over, however, the tensions had pretty well dissipated. Marshall himself was such a great leader that there were no internal frictions in the Embassy. Aside from his brilliance and professional insight, Green's puns and humor were instrumental in maintaining cohesion in the Embassy. When he first arrived, the Embassy staff was invited to the Residence. When we got there, we found that there were already 3 or 4 thousand Indonesians in the square in front of the Residence. They had signs, along the lines “Green, go home.” Marshall was somewhat startled, having just arrived. He started that day—and still does today—to refer to these demonstrators as “Gringos.” He said that despite this unfriendly welcome, he took heart because at the bottom of one of the signs there was written in lipstick:”.....and take me with you.” That was a sign to him that eventually he would be welcomed.

There are numerous stories about Marshall Green. He is one of the heroes of the Foreign Service. One day, I took some mining people to see the Ambassador. I was the note taker and was busy doing so. But with Marshall, once you got to know him, you could feel when he was about to make one of his famous puns. On that day, at the end of the meeting, as people were saying goodbye, Marshall stopped them and said: “Gentlemen, just a minute please before you leave. I have been thinking about your mining prospects. Freeport Sulfur I notice is out here looking for copper, US Steel is out looking for bauxite; Anaconda Copper is here looking for tin. The trouble with you people is that no one is mining their own business.”

Whatever of substance he had told them, the miners remembered that pun. Marshall had a tremendous intellect that could make a point in a very unusual way. His wit got him into trouble a little later, however, when he told Stanley Karnow that “he knew what we were doing in Cambodia; we were widening down the war.” Karnow printed that without attribution, but the substitution of the word “widening” for “winding” immediately pointed to Marshall. Henry Kissinger reportedly knew where the leak had come from. No one else in

the US Government could have coined a phrase like that. But Green's immense intellect and wit, bolstered by tremendous spirit and energy, was a unifying force for the Embassy in Jakarta and an inspiration to me personally.

I had met Marshall just once before when I was in Canberra; he and his wife Lisa had come down to Australia. Australia held a life long fascination for Marshall; I think he was happy to conclude his Foreign Service career as Ambassador to that country. On that early visit, he had blown through the Embassy like a whirlwind; so that is how I remembered him.

I might just add that in terms of my own personal development, I felt I was an apprentice in the Foreign Service until I was assigned to Jakarta. The early period was not a period that I remember with any great relish, particularly the Bonn assignment which came close to ending my career then and there. Jakarta was a tremendous opportunity; I grew professionally there. I found that I was interested in reporting and writing and although ostensibly an economic officer, I was reporting on political economic matters —mining, oil and the politics thereof. I began to develop a writing style which I think enabled me to communicate quite well with readers. I also began to think in broad terms, putting the immediate experience in broader contexts; i.e. feudal baronies at the center of economic development; the impact of briberies of all sorts on a government. But not only the limitations: the ability of Suharto's military dictatorship, using well trained economists, to bring order, stability and development to a chaotic situation was apparent. Furthermore, I began to understand that it was the role of an American embassy to assist American business—that is a theme that became increasingly important to me in my later assignments. The American business community comprises a very influential part of the power that the US is able to exert in different foreign countries. That led me to the conclusion that an embassy should aid American business ventures—not always obviously and not blindly—but as a tool of US foreign policy. All of these views emerged and were strengthened by my Jakarta experience. So I consider that assignment to have

been pivotal to my career and my own life. I think back on it as being one of two most important assignments along with Korea. It was a great maturing experience.

I must say, though, that by the end of my tour in Jakarta, I had had my fill of economic assignments. The Department however, had different views; it wanted to use my Indonesian experience and assigned me to the Office of Fuels and Energy in the Bureau of Economic Affairs in Washington. I would have preferred to work on the Indonesia desk or some other assignment with more political content in the East Asia Bureau. During early days in the Foreign Service, I always intended to follow the footsteps of my older cousins, Stanley—an economic officer in the Foreign Service—Harlan and Van, who had been deeply involved in the Marshall Plan. As time progressed I hoped to move out of the economic specialty, however. I wanted to become a political officer. That view was reinforced by my Indonesian experience, which, as I suggested, called for more political than economic analysis. I never felt very confident as an “economist”; Gordon Donald and the more junior Mal Churchill knew a lot more about macro-economics—GDP, balance of payments, foreign exchange, etc.—than I did. I did not need to have that statistical background for my job in Indonesia; I was comfortable dealing with the supply side of an economy, but the issues that I had to analyze were more often than not political rather than economic. That reinforced my desire to move into the political “cone” so that I could study how people acted and reacted. How governments operated and how to deal with them on political and security issues.

Q: So, in 1968, you went to work for the Office of Fuels and Energy (EB).

CLEVELAND: Right, but I had no intention of staying there more than a couple of years. The assignment did not come as a complete shock because after my experience in Jakarta, there was some logic to assigning me to “Fuels and Energy.” But I also expected that the Department would sooner rather than later honor my request to move to the political side of the house. In the 1960s, just because an officer had been sent to economic training that did not necessarily dictate that he or she would be in the economic field

forever. I understood that I would have to serve some time doing economic work, but I certainly did not see myself carving out a long-range career in that field. The “cone” process by the mid-1960s had not yet calcified so that it was still quite flexible and changing from one field of expertise to another was not unusual.

My boss in the Office of Fuels and Energy was Jim Akins, who was quite an interesting character, as I found out and as Henry Kissinger and others found out later. First of all, Akins was brilliant; he was one of the smartest people I ever met. He might have phrased it even more strongly. There was always a trade-off with Akins. Soon after I reported for duty, Jim gave me his basement parking permit; I had to travel a long way and he lived much closer to the office than I did and he walked to the office in the morning. But in exchange for the permit, I drove him home every evening. One evening—I will never forget this experience—as I was chauffeuring Jim home and was approaching Mass Avenue, he turned to me and said suddenly that he had never had anybody work for him who was as smart as he was. “Oh,” I said. “Interesting.” I was not about to argue the point; for all I knew, it may have been correct. But then he added: “As a matter of fact, I have never worked for anybody as smart as I am.” That was Jim Akins! He was intellectually arrogant.

But he was also fascinating in many ways and taught me some things about the oil business. He introduced me to Ed Levy who was the “guru” of the oil consulting business. I learned about other aspects of the oil business that I had not seen or known about in Jakarta—the more dubious side of the big American oil company operations, which took advantage of producers or competitors. I am not referring to any illegal acts, but simply activities that seem somewhat questionable. I learned a lot about the history of the oil industry—i.e. how extraction companies, like ARAMCO, used to take 90% of the revenues, which by 1968 had been dramatically reduced. I learned about oil pricing—how it was determined, how rewarding it was for the oil companies, even when their share was down from 90% to less than 50%.

Most of my time in Fuels and Energy was devoted to oil, particularly developments in East Asia and Latin America. Jim and the other two staff members spent their time on Middle East issues. East Asia meant primarily Indonesia.

I must say Jim had a broad understanding of oil all over the world, although his expertise was on the Middle East in general where he had already spent some time. He was moreover a clairvoyant about what might happen to the oil business. He foresaw the development of OPEC into a major commercial power, able to force up the price of oil. In 1970, he predicted that oil prices—at the time the price was $1.32 posted for light Arabian crude although it actually sold for a discount at $1.19 per barrel—would rise to $4-5 dollars per barrel. There was no one, either in the government or the industry, that agreed with Jim; everyone tried to disparage the notion. Of course as it turned out, Jim had underestimated the steep rise. Oil prices rose to $12 per barrel and today is near $20, after having come down from over $30 after the “oil shock”. Jim was absolutely right when he predicted that OPEC would eventually dictate the price of oil.

Jim got deeply involved in preparing an oil import plan as a contingency matter. The new Nixon administration commissioned a study of oil imports, with emphasis on supply security and US options if the supplies were reduced or if world prices greatly increased. I think one of the driving forces for the study was the notion that the US should encourage prudent use of its domestic production so that in case of an emergency, we would have sufficient reserves available under our own soil. This contingency planning was certainly useful to me as a learning opportunity about the oil business.

As we began to further develop the oil import policy, we became of course involved in many inter-agency meetings. We met under the aegis of the NSC in their new Executive Office building. Jim went to those meetings and sometimes would take me along. Interior and its Bureau of Mines were key players in the government; DoD was always involved because it had a very real interest in the cost of energy, being the government's largest customer. When issues bore on Asia or Latin America, I would keep the appropriate

desk officers informed. But our issues were relatively non-controversial particularly when compared to Middle East ones. As I recall, I don't think the regional bureaus were that much concerned by oil in any case. At the time I am discussing, Akins worked for Jules Katz—the Deputy Assistant Secretary under Assistant Secretary Phil Trezise—who was a very tough, practical man, who later in the 1990s would make major contributions to US trade policies. Partly because of their ability and partly because the regional bureaus really didn't care, I think Trezise and Katz—and Akins in the fuels area—had a major voice in the Department and in the US government in the development of trade and economic policy. This was before the establishment of USTR and the transfer of the commercial function from the Department of State to Commerce. In the mid-to-late 1960s, the Department had considerable more clout on economic issues than it did in later periods, in part, as I said, because of the brilliance of the men in EB and partly because the responsibility for trade and economic policy had not yet been fragmented throughout the government.

I also again learned that politics and economics are hard to separate. The oil issues were a mixture of both disciplines as they had been in Indonesia. The oil issues moreover were a combination of domestic and international issues, so that bureaucratically, responsibility had to be diffused. But Akins was recognized in Washington as one of the bright lights and an expert in the oil business. In fact, as I was later told, eventually Akins went to the NSC to work directly with Kissinger on oil issues. He wrote a paper which could have become the US oil policy position; unfortunately, I suspect, it was not adopted. Akins ran into Ehrlichman and Haldeman, who apparently did not think very highly of his basic policy paper. Again I was told that they were reflecting the unhappiness of the CEOs of the major oil companies who saw Akins' prescriptions as a danger to their profits. That was enough to kill Akins' paper.

During my 18 months in “Fuels and Energy”, I managed to squeeze out one overseas trip—Venezuela, Ecuador and Columbia. It was the first—and last—time that I saw Latin America; so it was personally rewarding. The late 1960s was the beginning of the Andean oil industry. Venezuela had been developing its resources for some time, but Ecuador and

Colombia were just beginning. We had considerable interest in Venezuelan production, in its heavy oil and tars. Venezuela was a major player in OPEC which made it even more important for us. We had good relations with that country and had no major disputes in those days on oil issues. I did not get involved very much in Mexican oil issues; they had not yet become the focus of attention as they did later.

Oil has always fascinated me. It is at a key political-economic junction. It is an extraordinarily important and central commodity, which had and would even further become a key factor in our policy determinations. What I learned about oil in Jakarta and in Washington would prove to be useful to me in other assignments, although I never returned to the issue as the sole focus of my efforts.

There was one personality in EB that should be mentioned and that was Frances Wilson, the Executive Director. There are undoubtedly many stories about her, but the one I remember the best came towards the end of my assignment in EB. By 1970, I think I was even more ready for a regular political assignment. I asked Frances Wilson whether she could help me get an assignment to the East Asia Bureau (EA). I put the request to her several times—each time with increasing intensity. Finally, I got a letter from her telling me that I had been assigned to the Office of Finance in EB. That really upset me: in the first place, I did not, as I have said before believe that I was a professional economist—I did not have the prerequisites, particularly a sense about statistics, that a job in the Office of Finance required. I felt that I would have to struggle very hard just to keep my head above water in the Office of Finance. Secondly, as I have said, I had decided that the time had come for me to move to another functional discipline in a geographic bureau.

The letter reached me at about the time I was making inquiries in the East Asia Bureau about positions that might be available there. No luck until one day Bob Duemling, the special assistant to the Assistant Secretary, my Indonesian boss Marshall Green, asked me whether I would be interested in working in the Assistant Secretary's Office. I leaped at the opportunity; I couldn't believe my good fortunate because it was just the job that I

wanted. Even though I had responded positively, I wasn't sure that anything would come of the inquiry. But the next day, I got a call from Green, who remembered me from Jakarta where I think he was pleased with my work. He told me that he would be pleased to have me as his Special Assistant. After that conversation, I went to Akins and told him about the offer and my wish to accept it. Jim said that he would support my wishes. But as the next days passed, it became clear that EA wanted me right away and did not want to wait until the end of my EB tour which still had six months to go. Bob Duemling was leaving and the Bureau wanted his replacement right away.

When Akins found out about the timing of the immediate transfer, he hit the roof. He said he could not get anyone to replace me. He was so furious he refused to release me. I told him that the timing had come as a surprise to me as well, but that the Special Assistant job was one I wanted very badly, and I hoped that the six months' difference would not scotch the deal. But Akins went to Trezise and complained. At the same time EA asked me whether I was still interested in light of the anger that my transfer had created, and I assured the Regional Bureau that I was still very much interested. In fact, as the storm was brewing, I had already begun to look for employment outside the government. I had made up my mind that I would not stay in EB or in any other economic position. So if the transfer to EA had not come through, I was prepared to leave the Foreign Service. If I was going to be in the Service, I wanted to be in the “front line” and that was a regional bureau in Washington or as a political officer in the field.

Marshall Green through Bob Duemling in essence told me to sit tight. I didn't hear anything for several days, when all of a sudden, I was told to report to EA. I heard later that Green had called Trezise on my behalf; Trezise reportedly said that he could not turn down Marshall Green in such a case. Akins was besides himself when he heard; he took his revenge by writing a terrible efficiency report on me. That was entirely unfair. I lost all respect for Akins, even though after my complaint, he did improve the first draft somewhat. But one would have to say that even in its final version, it was not a good OER. It was obvious that the report in 1970 was far worse than the previous one, and led to the

conclusion that my work had deteriorated in the intervening period, which was certainly not the case. It was that comparison that really aggravated me. Had this happened years later, I would have taken the issue up through the grievance procedure, but that alternative did not exist in 1971.

There is no question that that ER kept me off the promotion list for at least a couple of years. Fortunately, I had had some good reports between the poor Bonn and EB ones; otherwise I would have been in much greater difficulties than I was. Promotion Panels are not known for their fast reading ability. Rarely do they go back six years in a file; so that I doubt that the ER that George McGhee had written was given much attention after such a long intervening period. The members just don't have the time to read all files from front to back when there are so many files to be reviewed.

Q: In 1970, you assumed the duties of Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for East Asia, Marshall Green. As you have said, you knew Green well from your assignment to Jakarta. What did you do for Marshall during the period 1970-73?

CLEVELAND: Like most “Front Office” jobs, it is up to an individual what he or she makes of it. There were of course certain requirements: the management of the paper flow in the Assistant Secretary's office including determining which documents had to be seen by the principal and which had to be seen by one or more of the deputies; supervision of the documents that were to go from the Assistant Secretary to the principals of the Department—i.e. made sure that they conformed with the strict rules imposed by S/S; that the Assistant Secretary's decision were implemented; etc. I had two aides and a secretary working for me, primarily on the paper flow.

After a learning period, like most active special assistants, I became involved in some policy issues. I attended and wrote up a lot of meetings. I tried on a couple of occasions to “correct” a couple of memoranda sent by one officer director or another to Green; that was not welcomed and I stopped doing that. I recall preparing the outline of a speech

that Marshall was to give, placing some of the major EA issues in the context of major economic initiatives like Bretton Woods.

When Dick Sneider became the deputy for North-east Asia, - principally Japan and Korea, he used me to help him. By that time, I knew enough about EA that I was able to contribute some ideas. Dick was the only Deputy who regularly asked for my help on substantive matters; the other Deputies would ask for my help from time to time, but not as consistently as Sneider did. I remember participating in a major paper on Northeast Asian security that Dick was developing. As I said, by the time this happened, I had already been in EA for two years and I felt comfortable with most of the major issues facing the Bureau.

When I first arrived, Win Brown was the senior Deputy, although he was already a Career Ambassador. But Marshall had convinced him to take the job even though it may have been below his grade level. Brown took the job because he admired Green and the feeling was mutual. Jonathan Moore was one of the Deputies; he was a political appointee —a young, hard charging Republican—who had spent some years working for Elliot Richardson, when he was the Deputy Secretary. Bob Barnett was the Deputy in charge of economic issues; he was followed by Frank Barger. Sneider and Art Hummel became Deputies, later on. Sneider had returned to Washington from Tokyo where he had been the DCM. He thought that he was going to be the senior Deputy—Sneider was very ambitious. But Art Hummel came on board first. Marshall liked Art very much and finally decided that Hummel would become the senior Deputy. I remember Marshall asking me for my advice on this issue. I don't think I gave him an altogether useful reply. I didn't think it was right for me to choose between Hummel and Sneider. I liked them both. I did help Green in trying to soothe Sneider's feelings, although that was not easy.

I remember the major, rather silly battle that occurred concerning the size of the desks that the Deputies used. Hummel came to me because he wanted a desk that was as large if not larger than Sneider's. Dick had been given the larger office, which the senior Deputy usually occupied. I guess that was part of the compromise; Hummel became the

senior Deputy but got a smaller office. In any case, the “desk war” broke out, but I can't remember how this “major policy issue” was finally resolved.

I did a lot of personnel work, which I enjoyed and I think I did quite well. In fact, by the time I left EA in 1973, I was an important player in the personnel assignment process. During this period, the regional bureaus picked the DCMs for their embassies as well as political and economic counselors. The central Personnel Office kept trying to become involved in the assignment process, but it was never able to match our knowledge of the individual officers who were candidates for these key positions. So we in EA had the final word and because Marshall was very busy much of that burden fell to me. I sat in on the EA senior assignment meetings. Since I had been in EA for a couple of years, I knew our personnel well and was therefore able to make a considerable contribution to the selections. Marshall looked to me for background and advice on these assignments and I think I helped him on personnel matters.

EA had a lot of media attention because we were still in the Vietnam period. I saw the press and TV representatives frequently, briefing them on recent developments. I viewed this media liaison as enjoyable. I did get into trouble one time—the day in 1972 after the Yushin Constitution was introduced in Korea. Tad Szulc of “The New York Times” took me to lunch. He asked me thirteen times—literally—what the leadership of the Department thought about the new Constitution. Yushin was not what anyone would consider a “democratic” Constitution; if anything it was a legal rationale for the Park Chung Hee authoritarian regime. Twelve times I told Szulc that I would not answer that question because it was obviously a sensitive issue. On the thirteenth time, I said: “God damn it, Tad, you know perfectly well how they felt!” That remark turned into a front-page headline about how the State Department leadership viewed the new Korean Constitution with great unhappiness. The story itself said nothing about how the Department leadership felt; it was only in the morning headline. Within fifteen minutes of the time I arrived at work that morning, I was summoned by Green. Don Ranard, the Korean Country Director, was in the room. Marshall asked me whether I had talked to Szulc. I admitted that I had, but that

the story was not based on anything I had actually said. Marshall said, “Darn” which is about as strong a word as he ever used; he had hoped, he said, to be able to tell Alexis Johnson, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, that the “leak” had not come from his office. Don, who was a strong human rights supporter even then, piped up and said, “Well, God dammit, Marshall, it is true!” There was no disagreement on that remark.

There was only one other occasion when I felt badly about a story. I think it appeared in the “Washington Star”. It was about a UN vote on the China issue, where I predicted the US vote to George Sherman. Nobody traced it to me, but I faulted myself. But that was the extent of trouble with the media. All my other briefings and conversations were well received and accurately reported.

My willingness to speak to the media first started in Jakarta. I didn't think then it was uncommon; several of my Embassy colleagues were talking with the press—it was an interesting time in Jakarta and we could be helpful to the press in understanding what was going on. The events after the coup were mostly positive, certainly on the economic side, and it was important we believed for the press to have an appreciation of the major changes taking place. I also liked the press people. They were useful in that periodically they would pass information on that was useful to me and the Embassy. I would spend a few evenings at the bar of the Indonesia Hotel talking to people like Carston Praeger, later foreign editor of “Time”. Periodically, I would talk to the Kalb brothers, John Hughes—a Pulitzer Prize winner—, Bob Keatley—who is still a friend—, and others who would come in and out of Jakarta to write stories about the “new” Indonesia. I liked them and I learned a lot from them. Fred Emery of the London Times became a special friend in later years.

I remember reading Harold Nicholson's book on diplomacy; he said that as a junior officer he had learned a lot more from the press than it had from him. So I have always kept an open door to the press. While in EA, I used to see Hendrick Smith and Terence Smith of “The New York Times”, Bill Mader of “TIME”, “NEWSWEEK” reporters, Bob Keatley—then with the “Wall Street Journal”, etc. I never told the press anything that was not true

—at least as far as I knew. I always spoke on “background”—never for the record. I was never quoted. My information and discussion was not front page material; I tried to paint the background and framework against which events and decisions were taking place; in other words, was trying to give the media information and insights which would permit it to report a more informed story. This was particularly true on Vietnam stories, where the Washington based reporters were somewhat handicapped by being so far removed from the action. The fact I was also far removed didn't seem to bother me. At my level I was not privy to a lot of the more high level considerations that were taking place; even Marshall was not privy to discussions taking place on Vietnam in Paris.

Bill Sullivan was the EA Deputy on Vietnam. Bill, although officially a member of Marshall's staff, played a lone hand. He had been our Ambassador in Laos having already reached ambassadorial level at an early age, after an assignment as Special Assistant to Averell Harriman. He had a very powerful personality—very tough. Secondly, he had a direct line to Kissinger—a much stronger tie than I had first realized. And then of course he had a direct line to the Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos desks. But he was not really part of the EA team; for example, he never attended Green's staff meetings. For all practical purposes, he seemed just to be attached to EA Bureau, even though he was a Deputy Assistant Secretary. He would tell Marshall what he wanted Marshall to know; much he did not share. For example, he never told Marshall about his most critical actions while in EA —the thirteen trips he took secretly to Paris with Kissinger for the Vietnam negotiations. My view was that Sullivan did not treat Marshall as an Assistant Secretary should have been by one of his Deputies; I think that was unconscionable and unforgivable. He should have found a way, although I have no doubt that Sullivan was under orders from Kissinger to keep certain things from Marshall or anyone else. This was not the only example of Kissinger's style of operation, but others in many instances found ways around his dictates.

Later on, John Kelly, our Ambassador in Lebanon, took orders from the NSC without informing the then Secretary of State, George Shultz. When Shultz found out about

that, Kelly was immediately recalled to Washington and came very close to being fired. I certainly have some sympathy for Kelly; it is a very difficult predicament, but my view is that an ambassador or any Foreign Service Officer belongs to a chain of command and that one should accept orders only from that chain. If you are under direct orders from the President, then of course you follow those, but orders from the NSC Advisor or his staff should come to an officer through the established chain or at least be shared with one's superiors. In the Sullivan case, I found it unacceptable that he would not share his directives from the NSC Advisor or knowledge with his boss, Assistant Secretary Green. Since Marshall didn't know, I certainly was not aware of what Sullivan was doing until later. The Vietnam negotiations were theoretically under Green's purview; it was understood internally that Sullivan was the lead man within the Department.

But this situation must also be seen within the larger context; we were then in a period when President Nixon and Kissinger had in effect sidelined the Department. They were in total control of the conduct of the major foreign policy issues, and had very little opposition from the Department because Secretary Rogers was a patsy, who did not have the knowledge or relationship with Nixon adequate to off-set Kissinger's inside track. So Kissinger had an open field in which to operate.

This situation was exacerbated by Elliot Richardson's departure. As long as Richardson was the Deputy Secretary, the Department was a major player in many issues; when he left, the Department's role became even less important. Kissinger's modus operandi was to keep the Department busy on many non-important matters, particularly on the subject matters which he wanted to control. His continual demands to the Department for papers and studies kept us busy producing reams of inconsequential material. I recall Mark Pratt did a 400 page National Security Study Memo (NSSM) on Laos. As Marshall once said about the NSSM: “We'll never miss 'em.”

Another Kissinger tactic: while Marshall and Jonathan Moore and others carefully examined an issue, Kissinger would appear at some NSC meeting and announce the

President's position before anyone had had a full opportunity to voice their views. Finally, Kissinger—I am sure with Nixon's blessings—cut experts like Marshall Green out of the process to which they could have been valuable contributors, since they often knew more about the subject matter than either Nixon or Kissinger would ever know. Marshall and other Department experts were left out of the game; that was particularly true on Southeast Asia and China.

Marshall had no idea that Kissinger was in China preparing for a Presidential trip. I was in his office when Marshall received a call from Secretary Rogers telling him about the Kissinger trip and the planned Presidential trip. Marshall's first reaction was to praise the initiative. He said that he had hoped for many years that such a rapprochement would come about and had begun planning for it in 1960 when Consul General in Hong Kong. But then Marshall asked the Secretary whether the Japanese had been informed. Rogers did not understand the question. Marshall went on to ask again whether the Japanese had been informed. Rogers had to be told of the importance of keeping the Japanese informed; he had to be told that every Japanese Prime Minister had dreaded the day when he would find out from a public source that the American President was on his way to Beijing. Later we saw a picture of Sato sitting in front of a TV set, looking very glum, listening to the news of the Presidential visit which he found out about at the same time as the rest of the world.

Much later John Holdridge, who was the NSC staffer for the Far East for Kissinger told me that the Japanese angle had been discussed in the White House. This may have been true, but the decision not to give the Japanese advance notice had been wrong and created unnecessary tensions between us and the Japanese subsequently—the Nixon “Shokku”. Holdridge's view was that if the Japanese had been informed, it would have been in the public press the next day. That was not the conclusion that the State Department experts would have reached. They felt that a one-on-one session with the Prime Minister would have insured the confidentiality of the information and would have avoided embarrassing Sato. There is no question that the opening to China was a major

foreign policy coup, but the way it was done was a devastating blow to Marshall. As I said, Marshall had hoped for such an event for many years, but when it actually happened he was cut out.

One final piece of irony on China. Marshall set up two sessions with academics on China in 1971 and 1972 to discuss what we should do. They were exceptional sessions and came up with the need for opening to China. But of course they were irrelevant.

Let me return to the press for a moment. In all of my conversations, in addition to sensitive material, I avoided references to particular personalities and who did what to whom; that was not my style. I tried to provide the larger picture. I never had any doubt that the media had an important role to play in foreign policy. I felt then, and I do still today, that if you treat the media positively and with trust and were as open as you could possibly be, it would be reciprocated. It is true that most of the people I dealt with were either at the time or became leaders in their profession. With the one exception that I have described, they reported my comments accurately. Of course, I was not their only source, so that they were always able to double check what I might have said. I never tried to deny my press contacts; Marshall certainly knew what I was doing and I suspect that other parts of the Department did as well. But I was never told to cease and desist, in part because I did not try to use the media for my own purposes; I was providing background information, as I have said, to enable the media to do a better job of informing its public.

One final word: a lot of what I learned about the press and how it operated came from John Hightower, the AP's Pulitzer Prize winning diplomatic correspondent. He was a marvelous human being and a great reporter...and luckily for me a good friend. I got to know him through Carter who was a friend of Martha Hightower, who taught our boys reading.

I must make it clear that Marshall never complained about being cut out of some of the key Far East policy decisions. But I think he was shattered by the way he had been

treated. This was particularly true because while in Indonesia, he had had a long, long conversation—into the early hours of the morning—with Nixon, who was then a private citizen. I think it was clear that Nixon had accepted Marshall's approach to Far East issues, particularly on the theme of helping the Asians to help themselves. The converse of that view was that the US should not be so deeply involved in the affairs of foreign countries. China was also brought up during this long dialogue, with Marshall urging an opening to this huge country. A couple of years later, Green was the originator of the "Guam doctrine" (which later evolved into the "Nixon doctrine")— a speech in which Nixon said that we were going to help the Asians help themselves. That original Green concept eventually turned into the US exit strategy from Vietnam because the "Nixon doctrine" called for the Vietnamese to do their own fighting. That is not necessarily what Marshall had in mind when he drafted the Guam speech, but that was the seed from which our new Vietnam policy grew.

So the subsequent snubbing of Green by Nixon and Kissinger must have hurt Marshall even more than it would have under normal circumstances; after all, he had been the instigator of some of the most important initiatives that Nixon took in the Far East, except that when the time came to put these new policies into effect, Green was left out of the process. He focused on issues like Laos and Cambodia, when they became a problem. But Marshall never expressed any anger or anguish; he was obviously hurt and upset by the way he was being treated, but he never pouted; he went on doing the best job he knew how. Many years later he said to me while we were talking about Phil Habib, whom he always saw as somewhat of a rival, "Well, in retrospect, I probably should have done it the way Phil did." I was not sure then nor today what exactly Marshall had in mind, but it was obvious that some underlying bitterness about his career had lasted. In any case, Marshall could never have done the things that Phil did; they were entirely different personalities with different outlooks.

In addition to the areas I have mentioned—China, Southeast Asia—there was always interest on the Seventh Floor and in the White House on Japan. But this was a period of

very little tension and the relationships were positive, except for the three “Nixon Shokkus”. But I was not very deeply involved in Northeast Asia issues; I had not served there and didn't have any particular expertise. I used to repeat the “party line” that Japan was the most important country in Asia and that it was the “linchpin” of our position in the Far East —a phrase that seems to have been immortalized. Sneider handled Japan matters and worried about the “Shokkus”, the China trip, soybeans, etc., all subjects that unsettled the Japanese. But by and large I believe we managed our relations with the Japan well in this period and never had any major uproars.

I never felt that the Assistant Secretary was stretched “too thin”; i.e. that issues were neglected. We had strong Deputies who made decisions and then Kissinger personally handled the most vexing problems—China and Indochina. In fact, there was a debate on whether EA's jurisdiction should not be extended to cover South Asia. We thought South Asia issues could be handled by either EA or NEA, although we had a preference for jurisdiction over South Asia matters being transferred to EA. It was clear then, as it is today, that the NEA Assistant Secretary had adequate time to devote to South Asia issues, but I am not sure that today's solution—setting up a separate bureau—is a wholly satisfactory answer either.

One last thing I did for Marshall; I set up weekly think sessions on various EA subjects. Originally designed to bring Secretary Rogers up to speed on Vietnam, Rogers never came. So the meetings became bull sessions on all aspects of US East Asia policy. Because the people were excellent (Art Hartman, Mort Abramowitz) the sessions were stimulating.

The assignment as special assistant was a very useful training ground. After three years —which was an unusually long assignment for someone in my position—I had developed a good grasp of how the Department worked. I also got to know virtually everyone in EA. Finally, I learned something about management style from Dick Sneider, who was a good manager. I once told him that; he answered that he had not started out that way and that

he had to work hard to become a good manager. Dick was very exacting; he was well organized. Dick also stood out in contrast with Marshall, who was intellectually brilliantly organized, but was not a hands-on manager. He certainly expected issues to be handled expeditiously and correctly, but he himself devoted greatest attention to the intellectual analysis of a problem. He was more of an ideas leader; he left the responsibility for the day-to-day activities and movement to his deputies like Sneider and Hummel.

In addition, EA was blessed with good country directors. My favorites were Dick Ericson, Tom Shoesmith and Ed Masters, all of whom became ambassadors. Al Bergson and John Dexter were there and were very good. Ed Masters was exceptionally well organized; in fact I think he was the best organized officer I ever encountered. I think, in retrospect, we would have to conclude that EA in this period ran well; we all worked hard in seeing that it did so. We thought we were the equal of EUR, which had historically had the reputation of being the best staffed bureau in the Department. We were well staffed, led by an intellectual leader, supported by some hard charging and exacting deputies and excellent office directors.

Q: In 1973, you were assigned to Seoul, Korea as the Politico-Military officer. Is that an assignment that you had requested?

CLEVELAND: It was indeed. It was a job that I wanted. I had asked for it specifically and Marshall fully supported my desire. I had become interested in Korea and in addition it clearly removed me from the economic field. The Politico-Military job was actually the Number Two job in the Political Section. Phil Habib was the Ambassador and Dan O'Donahue was the Political Counselor. I had not known Phil but Dan and I had entered the Foreign Service in the same class and therefore had known each other for many years. My first DCM was Frank Underhill, with whom I was slightly acquainted because he had been the Indonesia Country Director in Washington while I was serving in Jakarta. Frank was succeeded by Dick Ericson, whom I knew well from our days together in EA. So I knew the senior players well except for the Ambassador.

I had never been to Seoul before. When we arrived at our new post, we found that we were going to have to live in a compound. I have already mentioned my discomfort with those kind of living arrangements; the opportunity to live among locals was one of the reasons why I was happy to go to Jakarta. In fact, once we had adjusted, we found that in Seoul, living in an American compound was not a great hardship or disadvantage; we were able to become completely immersed in the Korean society. Our home was in Compound Two, which was a short walk to the Embassy. The housing area was surrounded by walls, but outside of that we were in the midst of Seoul residential area. I did not find that in Seoul, living in a compound interfered in the slightest with establishing personal contacts with Koreans.

In Seoul it was relatively easy to be in touch with the Korean community because there were a large number of Koreans, mostly American educated and all English speakers, who welcomed American Embassy personnel. Quite a few of them were in influential positions and were helpful professionally as well as personally. Dixie Walker, our Ambassador in the 1980s, when I was DCM, used to say that there were more graduate degree holders from American universities and colleges working in high corporate and government jobs in Korea than in any other country in the world, including the US.

I don't believe that Seoul was unique in that respect; I think every overseas American government establishment has a group of pro-American local people who want to stay in touch with Americans. I am not saying this in any negative sense, although at times I was a little cynical about some and questioned whether their motives were entirely friendly. Some were extraordinarily nice and helpful; they also helped us to meet other members of the Korean society. It is true, I believe, that perhaps the Embassy in Seoul had more of these local contacts than most other posts. But there were good reasons. In the first place, the US was an unparalleled overwhelming influence on Korean foreign relations. Secondly, we had troops in Korea to protect that country from an invasion from the North. Thirdly, we were then and are today Korea's major trading partner; we bought in the 1970s

something like one-ninth of their economy. Finally, we were the number one attraction for Korean emigrants, in addition to being the main attraction for academic studies.

So Korea and the US had many, many ties which I think accounted for the large number of Koreans who wished to be associated with the Embassy. On the other side, Americans found Koreans, despite their well earned reputation for negotiating toughness and stubbornness, fun to be with. They were open, mercurial in many ways, and most were generous people. I think Americans probably felt more comfortable with them than other Asians—although generalizations like that need to be taken with caution. We got along personally with Koreans well; they were generous in introducing us to their culture, their countryside and their history. We played a lot of golf with Koreans and drank a lot of Scotch with them.

Seoul had some aspects of a city “under siege”. We had for example, monthly air raid practices, when all the citizens would have to evacuate the streets and run to the nearest shelters. If you traveled north outside of Seoul, you would run into a maze of tank traps, defensive obstacles and blowable bridges which would be used in an invasion to block roads. Everywhere one went in Korea, you noticed military encampments—both American and Korean. The landscape itself was a constant reminder of the threat from the North. I think we all noticed this atmosphere, although, since my job focused on this aspect of Korean life, I may perhaps been more aware of it than others. But I don't think that I personally felt any immediate threat. A study of the balance of forces on the Peninsula, when added to the fire and manpower that we could bring to bear from outside Korea, would lead one to the conclusion that the North had to be either very stupid or very desperate to start any hostilities. Of course, none of us knew enough about the North to be entirely confident that they would not make some dumb mistake. We concluded they were aggressive, but not crazy.

At the same time, I shared the view of most that the North was un-predictable. I thought that it was perfectly capable at any time of undertaking small unit actions, commando

invasion efforts, etc. The North was also a very tough negotiator at Panmunjom. So a threat of a North Korean eruption was always present. It was clearly the North's policy that if any of its nationals got into a tough situation—whether at sea in a small boat challenged by a South Korean vessel or in the DMZ when a North Korean may have strayed beyond the demarcation line—they would shoot first and ask questions later. So that in that sense they were unpredictable and at times provocative.

On the other hand, when a fire fight would erupt—and I observed the evolution of many—I noticed that control of events would be quickly taken over by higher echelons, both in the North and in the South. That tended to localize any incidents. Phil Habib used to say that one would never know what was actually going on in the DMZ and I think that was correct because we could not cover the zone all the way across the Peninsula. But where we did have observation points, you could readily notice that command and control of a bad situation would be taken over by higher echelon headquarters very rapidly. In the North, that usually meant that Pyongyang would take command; it was quite clear that it would not permit these incidents to get out of hand. My guess was that the policy was that under no circumstances would the North wish to show any weakness; as I said, they would shoot first and ask questions later. But once the initial exchange had taken place, Pyongyang would exercise restraint and not further aggravate a situation by aggressively moving forces towards the South. So I never thought that a major invasion from the North was a very realistic possibility. Although that may have been due more to my naivete than knowledge, that is how things have turned out.

My view that we were far from a second Korean war was also based on the fact that there hadn't been a major outbreak of hostilities on the Peninsula since 1950. There had been a perceptible rise in tensions in the DMZ in 1968-69 with hundreds of deaths—I learned a lot about that from Dick Ericson who was serving in Seoul at the time. Those tensions, which were accentuated by fire fights, had receded in 1969. There were incidents after that, but they were relatively minor compared to the deaths that occurred in the 1968-69 period, when we had the Pueblo incident and the Blue House raid. The assassination of Madame

Park in 1973 was a critical moment but in general I believe that by 1973, relationships between the North and the South, although tense, had calmed down from the previous decade; my view was that the North was being less aggressive.

This is not to say that both the South Koreans and we did not continually harp on the possibility of a North invasion or other aggressive actions. We did. This was due in part to the need for us to be constantly alert and prepared because any sign of weakness or relaxation on the part of the South or the US might well have led the North to make a serious policy miscalculation. (Masters of real politik, Koreans are quick to exploit weakness.) Under such circumstances, I think the risks of an attack would have risen considerably. That perception led me and most other American officials in Korea to the conclusion that the withdrawal of American forces would be a major mistake. I felt that the psychological environment on the Peninsula required an American presence and a well prepared and alert military force south of the DMZ that could be a deterrent to the North's ambitions. It was important not only that the US and South Korean forces be capable and alert, but that we publicly state repeatedly that we were concerned about Pyongyang's intentions, both to maintain pressure on the North and to insure that we ourselves did not let down our guard, which would have been the worst prescription for potential disaster. I think the validity of this thesis grew in my mind the longer I studied the situation in Korea; I am not sure that I had given it much thought before my assignment. But as I learned more about the military situation on the Peninsula, the more I became convinced that a well prepared and ready deterrent force was absolutely essential.

So in 1976, when President Carter began to talk about troop withdrawal, I thought his position was ill-advised; psychologically, it was ill timed and raised risks where they were not necessary. In fact, the withdrawal of American troops might well have invited a North attack; such an event, as Habib used to say, would have lost us all that we had tried to achieve in the South.

An American troop presence, in my view, was essential to maintaining peace on the Korean Peninsula. I also thought that if we were to maintain troops in Asia, they should be near the potential battle field as an indication of our resolve; that was important not only for the Koreans, but also for the Japanese who also needed clear evidence of US resolve to maintain stability on Northeast Asia. Korea provided us some of the cheapest and best training grounds in the world; furthermore, if the division was to be removed from South Korea it would have had to be demobilized because we didn't have the resources to accommodate it in the continental US. I don't think there was too much concern about Carter's comments during the campaign; there was probably some nervousness in both the Korean and American community, but a Carter electoral victory was hardly a sure thing in 1976.

But once he became President in 1977 and announced his plan to follow through on his campaign commitment to withdraw American ground troops from South Korea, then there was a major uproar. The withdrawal announcement was made at a noon White House press briefing. It was made one hour before he was to see the Korean Ambassador, Park Tung Jin, who had no advanced warning. I was as infuriated by that tactic, which showed disrespect and was in very bad taste, as I was by the policy decision itself. I think there was a general consensus in the Embassy that it was a very unwise policy decision as well as an embarrassment on how it was announced.

I must say that I was not totally convinced that the withdrawal policy was totally wrong because of my view of the threat; i.e. not as great as it had been. I thought that a well thought-out plan, implemented over a period of years and reversible at any time if a threat loomed, might be acceptable. That became Ambassador Sneider's view; whether that was his real view or a tactical compromise with the new President, was not clear. I am inclined to believe that Dick thought that the policy was essentially wrong, but he may well have reached the conclusion that to fight it straight on was not likely to be successful and therefore he looked for some kind of compromise. So he sent to

Washington a series of messages which said if the withdrawal goal was immutable, then he had some suggestions on how it might be reached with minimal damage to our position in South Korea and Northeast Asia as a whole. This became an eight or nine part series which involved many of the Embassy's senior officers. The bottom line was that Dick recommended a very slow withdrawal schedule, stretched out over years, so that a sense of catastrophe would not be generated in Northeast Asia. He also recommended that an expanded Air Force contingent be left in Korea and that as our troops withdrew, we increase our investment in the self-sufficiency of the South Korean armed forces.

In fact, that eight part series covered all aspects of our current and future relationships with South Korea; it covered political, economic and infrastructure issues. It was one of Dick's final reports because he was soon transferred to another position. It was a good series of messages, which unfortunately fell on deaf ears. I later found out from the Korean director, Ed Hurwitz, who had been the Political Counselor in Seoul for one year until 1976, that he had sent the messages to the EA front office with covering memoranda supporting the Embassy's views and recommendations, but that Dick Holbrooke, the new Assistant Secretary, had ignored them.

As I said, I was assigned to the job of Politico-Military officer and was also the deputy head of the Political Section. My main responsibility was to follow the politico-military scene in Korea. Essentially it was a matter of keeping up to date on events in Yongsan, the US military command post and insuring that political aspects of military questions were considered. I spent a great deal of my time in a liaison capacity with the US military. I had some contact with the Korean military, but that was limited primarily because our own military had such extensive contacts with their Korean counterparts that there really wasn't any need for another channel of communications. So most of my duties revolved around working with our own military on a broad range of issues, such as civic relations between the US military and the Korean communities—e.g. status of forces. I was the Executive Secretary of the Joint Committee on the Status of Forces.

Korea is one of those places where there is a special problem for US representation. It is vitally important that the Ambassador and the military CINC work together because there have been occasions when the Korean leadership has tried to play one off against the other. The role of the US Ambassador on military issues was first established by Ambassador Muccio and mirrors in some respect the relationship of the President to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. An American military which might have proceeded without adequate consultation with the civilian side of the US representation could have gotten us in considerable difficulties. There were political realities, both in Korea and internationally, that made it essential for an American Ambassador to be pre-eminent in Korea. The range of issues went from matters of war potential—the Pueblo incident, the murder of two officers in the DMZ, etc—to the more mundane issues like laying a pipeline through a Korean civilian area or a crime against a Korean by an American GI. Also there were questions of US military strategy—where our troops should be located—that required a political input. Then there were always political questions about the Armistice Agreement and its interpretation.

There were also many questions about sales of US military equipment, and the JUSMAG came under the Embassy. As in all cases, we had restrictions on the types of armaments that we would sell. These were in major part foreign policy questions, not only in Korea, but in a global context. Should we give the ROKs missiles for example.

For all these reasons, it was vital that the US Ambassador be given a voice in many military matters and he take strong positions whenever necessary. But an effective US Ambassador had to recognize that he had to deal with a four-star general who was not going to be a patsy for any civilian that came along. The best US position in Korea came when the Ambassador and the CINC worked hand-in-glove, on a voluntary and continual basis. The ideal was not always reached, but we all knew what the right model should be.

The role of the American four star general was a tricky one. He was the Commander of UN Forces which included Korean Forces—reporting to the UN through the Chairman of the

Joint Chiefs—, the Commander of US Forces—reporting to Commander in Chief, Pacific Forces (CINCPAC)—, and Commander of the 8th Army—so that all US forces could serve under an American general. All of this meant that the US was represented in Seoul by the American Ambassador—the personal representative of the President of the US—, and a four star US Army General, who served both in a US and a UN capacity. On paper, it looked like an organizational nightmare. The effectiveness of US representation is Seoul therefore had to depended heavily on the cooperation of the two principals.

A couple of months after I arrived, General Dick Stilwell became the Commander in Chief, UN and US forces. Phil Habib had been our Ambassador for a couple of years. As everybody knew, he was an extraordinary powerful man—almost overwhelming. He was very adept at maintaining civilian control over military affairs, which I think was quite appropriate in the Korean context. That Habib style did not encounter much resistance in Yongsan. He was an extraordinary man. Also a fine human being. Habib and Stilwell worked together reasonably well as far as I could tell, although I was just learning my job towards the end of Habib's tour. There were no explosions, although both were powerful men and I suspect that some tension may well have existed.

Dick Sneider followed Habib in 1974, after the attempted assassination of Park Chung Hee and the murder of his wife. Sneider had spent a lot of time in Japan and therefore knew the area well. But unlike Habib, he had never served in Korea before. The Sneider-Stilwell relationship deteriorated rapidly. I don't remember exactly when the problems between the two started, but tensions were high almost from the day Sneider arrived. I believe that much of the difficulties could be attributed to Stilwell's desire to be independent and in charge. He was, of course, a soldier and would follow orders, but it appeared to the Embassy and to Sneider particularly that he would often try to act behind Dick's back, both with Washington and the ROK. At times he would deal directly with the Koreans on matters that went beyond strictly military considerations. Sometimes, he would communicate with Washington, generating differences between the Pentagon and the Department of State. I don't think it would be fair to blame the situation in Seoul on

Stilwell entirely. Undoubtedly, Sneider contributed to the high tensions. Dick had a strong personality; he tended to be very aggressive and assertive. If he felt that he was being subverted and that his role as Ambassador was being minimized, he reacted strongly. So the combination of these two strong personalities did not augur for a smooth relationship —and it wasn't. Personal animosity developed; almost everything one did irked the other, down to minutiae such as methods of communications.

After a while, the situation between the principals became so tense that the main responsibility for liaison and communications between the Embassy and the US military fell on the DCMs—Ericson and later Tom Stern—and secondarily on me and my successors. Dick Ericson's father had been a Colonel in the Army and therefore he had some empathy for the military. He also was much more relaxed, particularly when contrasted with Sneider. As politico-military officer, I had daily contacts with the US military. The Political Counselors had some, but to a more limited extent. I think all of us below the level of the principals were very conscious of the friction at the top and tried our best to keep relationships close and effective. Ericson did yeoman service in plugging the gap. We at lower levels used to discuss the relationships of our principals quite openly; both Embassy and Command officers recognized the problem and worked very hard to overcome it.

I should make one more comment that is personally important. I think it was because of the situation in Seoul that I became thoroughly acquainted with the US military, both professionally and socially. I developed a great respect for them. As I suspect was true for many Foreign Service officers, before I came to know military officers, I viewed them as conservative and tradition bound. But my experiences in Seoul proved me wrong. I found those that I worked with to be flexible, imaginative and intelligent. They obviously had their own institutional biases and methods, but I never had any major problems in reaching some mutually satisfactory accommodations.

I found that as in every organization, the US military had its own personality problems. The most memorable of those was Lieutenant General Hollingsworth, then in command of I Corps, and the second ranking American military officer in Korea. He had his own problem with Stilwell. Hollingsworth had a rivalry with Stilwell; they both were vying for credit for having developed the concept of the “forward defense” strategy for defending South Korea. This was a radical departure from established concepts which relied primarily on defense in depth to thwart a North Korean invasion. It called for American and Korean forces to fall back as the North advanced forcing the North to extend its supply lines. The new doctrine called for stopping the North Koreans before they got to Seoul. Hollingsworth would take groups of US visitors to the front lines in his helicopter(s) and stand on one of the mountain tops of the ridge that divided North and South. He would point down at the Chorwon Valley and in his inimitable style, which always enthralled his audience, shout in his gruff voice, :”Gentlemen, do you see that large valley down there? That is the Chorwon! That is where we are going to slaughter the bastards!” The notion was to apply overwhelming fire power on invaders who in fact had only a narrow route into the South. He always called the Chorwon the “killing zone.” Holly was always a proponent of the use of massive fire power; he was famous for his tactics from Vietnam days, where he claimed he had dropped more ordinance during the Battle of Anloc than at any time since we had bombed Dresden and Berlin.

Our earlier military strategy was politically difficult to defend to the Koreans because it had assumed that the North would occupy Seoul. The new doctrine was much more politically palpable because it assumed that North Korean troops would never reach Seoul. The Koreans loved Holly.

When necessary, I would go to I Corps for liaison purposes. I once took the SOFA Committee, of which I was the Executive Director, there. Most of the SOFA members were Koreans, both military and civilians. Holly, as I suggest, was a colorful character. We sat in his briefing room waiting in silence. All of a sudden the door burst open. Holly

strode across the floor to the briefing podium which had on it a big I Corps symbol. Holly grabbed the cover, and flung it across the room with a great clatter, shouting: “Welcome, gentlemen, to the eastern front and the frontier of freedom”. The Koreans were thunderstruck; it was a masterpiece of theater.

On the other hand, I was in Seoul when Major General John Singlaub sounded off. He was the CINC's Chief of Staff and my principal contact—this was in 1977 after I had become Political Counselor. The DCM's—Ericson and then Stern—held weekly lunches with the Deputy Commander. Above them, Sneider had a close relationship with Stilwell's successor, General Jack Vessey. But much of the day to day liaison was supposed to fall to me and Jack Singlaub; we were supposed to meet weekly, but I don't think we did so with any regularity. In any case, we met frequently. I found him to be charming and fascinating. He knew a lot about the French underground with which he had operated behind German lines in France during WW II. Personally I thought we got along quite well.

On substantive issues, I found Singlaub pretty rigid, however, and quite uncompromising, but knowing that both the Ambassador and the DCM had good contacts with the military, I did not press him too far. If I ever discussed the troop withdrawal issue, I am sure we both agreed that it was not a wise policy. I was not totally surprised by the content of Jack's remarks to the press criticizing President Carter's decision on the troop withdrawal, although I must say I was taken aback by his public challenge to the President. Like most Foreign Service and military officers, I had been trained to carry our Presidential orders once they had ben issued. Jack forgot that fundamental role of a military officer. Since his first comment was made on an airplane as he was returning to the US, I never had the opportunity to talk to him about his open disagreement. Some reporters apparently got to him during a flight back and got him to talk. I think perhaps he was “setup” and may not have recognized the trap he was falling into. On the other hand, he may have been fully conscious of what he was doing; I don't know. It was an unusual and awkward situation for all of us.

In late 1976, Stilwell left and was replaced by General Jack Vessey. It was a magical change. I remember going to the military welcoming ceremony, including a major parade. As is customary, the press office of the Command had issued a biographic sketch of the incoming CINC. I was struck by the fact the Vessey, although having started as a private in the Army during WW II, had only become a general 6 years earlier, and here he was with four stars on his shoulders! He was really a late bloomer; once he had gotten that first star, the rest came quickly. That was very impressive. I was even more impressed when within a week, there was a noticeable change in the relationship between the Embassy and the CINC. There was first of all a very noticeable change in the relationships between the principals; deep suspicions, anger, open confrontations had been replaced by a close working relationship. I attribute this change essentially to Vessey's diplomatic and personal skills. He was a “soldier's soldier”—having risen from the ranks; he was one of the nicest human beings I have ever known and a great diplomat. In my experience, he was the finest soldier I have ever met. I have always felt, in somewhat simplistic terms, that Vessey was an “Omar Bradley” kind of guy. He was greatly respected and highly regarded by his men and ever loved.

Stilwell was an “intellectual” general—a planner; Vessey was both smart and charming and a man devoted to his troops—a leader. He had tremendous breadth and scope in his abilities; he was disarmingly simple and straight. He always used to say, after receiving a long and detailed briefing about some battle plan, “Gentlemen, all these plans sound very good and they are well thought out, but they do not take into account the smoke on the battlefield!” As Vessey well knew, there were always unpredictable circumstances that arise in the chaos of battle. That is not a new insight, but to me as a young Foreign Service officer, it struck me as much more pertinent than the analysis that the staff had prepared and worked on for weeks and months. Vessey was both sensible and sensitive. He was always very nice to me personally, although as the Political Counselor, I was junior in the pecking order; we used to play golf together from time to time and he was a great companion.

I am sure that the Stilwell-Sneider problem had become widely known in Washington. I remember one series of exchanges between General Brown, the JCS Chairman at the time, and Sneider. Brown, after receiving a complaint from Sneider had said that he had understood Dick's problems and suggested that he just be patient and firm with Stilwell, who as the good soldier that he was, would take orders if they were clearly and firmly expressed. I suspect that the JCS had also sent a message to Stilwell urging him to be more cooperative. I assume that Vessey was well briefed on the explosive nature of the relationship between the two American principals in Seoul and undoubtedly applied all of his skills to smoothing the waters as soon as he landed. He made a major effort to give Sneider control over those matters that the Ambassador clearly felt fell into his province; he also accorded the Ambassador respect and recognition that in Seoul, the American Ambassador was the senior US representative. That was key issue with Sneider; as long as his self-perception of his role was recognized, he was content. There was a lot of ego at stake. Vessey handled him beautifully.

I should note that my relationships with the military did not change when I became Political Counselor. In fact, I probably took the politico-military job with me. I did that in part because I thought that by that time, I had learned a lot about the military situation and had made a lot of friends among the officers. I enjoyed playing golf and was reasonably good in those days; so I would periodically be asked to join a group of senior military men. The military had started a tradition of an early Tuesday morning golf game—which met on Thursdays when it didn't play on Saturday—which brought US and Korean senior officers together in an informal setting. I was invited to join that group which helped both to firm up the personal relationships. Furthermore, I was the official Embassy contact with the CINC's Chief of Staff. So I saw a lot of the US military in my four years in Seoul.

I should also mention, that as the Politico-Military officer, I had developed a process which would allow me to be at military headquarters whenever any potential trouble might arise, such as an incident at the DMZ. Regardless of the time of day or night, if there was

trouble brewing, I would be alerted and able to be at headquarters to be the Embassy's “eyes and ears”. That, I think, was a valuable service that I provided. It was particularly important during the 1976 “tree cutting” incident, which was a seminal event. But there were other, too frequent, incidents on the border or on the seas. My presence enabled the Ambassador to be up to date on events as they unfolded. I continued this practice even after I became Political Counselor, even though another officer was assigned to the Section; I gave him other assignments and essentially kept the politico-military portfolio for myself. I had developed in the preceding years good close contacts in the US military and I enjoyed that job.

I need to go back in history a little to understand the evolution of my assignments in Korea in the 1973-77 period. As I mentioned, I came as the Politico-Military officer working for the Political Counselor, Dan O'Donahue. He left about a year later to join Phil Habib in Washington and was replaced by Ed Hurwitz. That was somewhat of a blow to me because I had hoped to be designated as Political Counselor at the time. I was behind my classmates, in part because of the unfortunate efficiency ratings that I had received earlier in my career, which I have mentioned previously. Having had been in Seoul for a year and having performed quite satisfactorily, I thought I was the logical candidate to be the Political Counselor. I thought I could have handled it adequately. So I made a bid for the job with Dick Ericson—one of the few times in my career when I “volunteered” for an assignment. But the job was given to Hurwitz, who, I was told, was a first rate language officer whom Phil Habib felt should be rewarded for acquiring that language skill. That was probably the right policy, although, as I said, I was disappointed at the time.

But Ed, because of personal problems, only stayed for a year. So the job was open again in the summer of 1975. I think Sneider, at that time, was tempted to bring in a new Counselor—Bill Clark, I believe, then in Japan—, but that apparently did not work out and I think Ericson put in a good word for me and the job was given to me.

I mentioned Hurwitz' language skills. I had no knowledge of Korean when I went to Seoul, but I started to take morning classes. Dan O'Donohue advised me to take the 100 sentence course which would have enabled me to do routine activities in Korea—market shopping, travel, etc.—, but he suggested that I not try to become bilingual because Korean was so difficult that I would just be frustrated. I think that was good advice. I tried to learn Korean for eight years—both tours—and by the end I could speak enough for every day conversation—Kisaeng House Korean—, but I don't believe I could have carried on a very substantive dialogue. I tried very hard, and enjoyed trying, but...I remember standing in a hotel lobby one day, listening to a group of German tourists being briefed on their day's sightseeing. It had been twenty years since I had heard German to any great extent, but I was able to understand that much better than the Korean I had learned. I don't think my investment in Korean paid sufficient dividends. I would call my Korean “survival”; it enabled me to navigate in day-to-day activities, but not beyond that.

I might interject at this stage a comment about the JUSMAAG (The Joint US Military Assistance Group) and its organizational situation. The chiefs were two-star generals —some better than others—, but all quite satisfactory. Both O.D. Street and Harry Griffith were fine officers—the latter is a friend to this day. But JUSMAAG was always an organizational problem. The Chief reported to the Ambassador from whom he received his substantive marching orders. On the other hand, he was an Army general who lived with the other US military officers on the US base at Yongsan, whose efficiency report was written by the CINC. So the JUSMAAG Chief had two bosses to satisfy, which is not easy particularly when the two principals were barely speaking to each other as in Sneider/ Stilwell days. I think we in the Embassy were well aware of the Chief's dilemma and tried to make matters as easy as possible. The working situation improved when Jack Vessey came, but it was inherently an impossible organizational situation: reporting to one boss for policy guidance and another for efficiency rating purposes. That is bound to be a recipe for problems and in fact that this what happened periodically, with the MAAG Chief being in the middle.

As I said earlier, my contacts with the Korean military were far fewer than those with the American, partly because the US military was working with their counterparts daily and party because I think the Korean officers were somewhat leery of the Embassy. So my contacts with the Korean military were mostly social—on the golf course, at Kisaeng houses, etc. On the issue of military sales, although we had a large and effective JUSMAAG, I did participate a little more actively both with the ROK military and defense officials, who were civilians. We did have politico-military issues in these sales programs, both in terms of Korean wishes and the process itself—who would pay, what technology might be transferred. We gave the Koreans large amounts of technology, which although perhaps not state-of-the-art, was much further advanced than they themselves could develop. They “reversed engineered” some of our products, enabling their R&D to progress much further and faster than it might have otherwise.

Although military sales was not perhaps the focus of my attention most of the time, I do remember that they were a concern. The Koreans always wanted to get the best equipment they could get for the least money. They also wanted the rights to manufacture their own versions of some of the equipment; e.g. tanks, guns, etc.—without paying royalties if possible—the biggest bang for the least cost. They were very good at reverse engineering and copying their military acquisitions. The JUSMAAG and the US military were probably more inclined to be forthcoming in satisfying Korean requests—”the brotherhood” of the military. I probably overstate the case, but the JUSMAAG sometimes seemed willing to provide anything at practically no cost. We in the Embassy and in the State Department in Washington were considerably more cautious and restrictive both in the kinds of equipment we would release and the costs. There was some pressure from American companies on us to be responsive to Korean requests; they wanted to make the sales. But I think we in general held the line to limit Korean access to capabilities which they did not really need to have for defensive purposes; in any case, in the event of hostilities, these were capabilities that our own military could provide very quickly. The Koreans of course resented this US military checkrein.

Related to this question of sales, there were other policy issues concerning the introduction of certain kinds of military operations and equipment into Korea. The one issue which separated me from the US military was that of “aggressive behavior.” Stilwell, as I suggested, was quite aggressive in his war plans. In exercises, he brought B-52s to Korea, flying them up from Guam. He flew them close to the DMZ. I didn't believe that this was a necessary act; it threatened the North unnecessarily. I recognized that the hard-liners wanted to make the point that if the North ever considered an invasion, the total might of the US forces could be brought to bear on it. I had no reason to believe however that the North did not already understand that and thought that the provocative use of B-52s was unnecessary and “over the line.” I also had personal reservations about the introduction of battlefield nuclear capable missiles. Stilwell was able to convince the Pentagon to bring a battery of Lance missiles to Korea; these were dual use missiles that could carry either regular or nuclear warheads. Vessey supported that concept, but I was opposed. It was a capability that I did not think absolutely necessary; nuclear weapons, whether strategic or theater, should be introduced with great care and only after a careful analysis which would have concluded that they were absolutely necessary. I felt therefore, under the circumstances existing in Korea at the time—i.e. no sign of immediate threat —the introduction of Lance was unnecessarily provocative. I think I even would probably have objected to their use in a war situation, except as a matter of last resort. In the late 1970s, we were in Korea for defensive purposes; we were there to react to a provocation, and not in the business of starting a fight. The introduction of Lance, I think raised a question of our policy; those missiles might well be considered as an offensive capability, particularly in the paranoid mind of the North Korean leadership. I think those missiles, just as the B-52s, were provocative.

“Team Spirit”, which was a large joint US-ROK exercise that went on for weeks, was the center piece of our military activities on the Peninsula. It kept getting larger and larger while I was in Korea; I have already mentioned the inclusion of the B-52s. We brought the 25th division from Hawaii, so that much of the exercise was devoted to the logistical

problems of ferrying whole division from thousands of miles away. I didn't have too much trouble with the concept of a joint exercise, but I was bothered by its increasing scope. It began to raise a question in mind about the rationale for the exercise and its importance. It is true that the North Korean military capacity was growing in this period, but I had considerable concern whether the appropriate response to that activity was an ever larger joint US-ROK exercise which included increasingly provocative aspects. Some of it could be justified, but I often wondered whether we weren't "crossing the line."

As for civic affairs, fortunately, the Koreans at the time were so appreciative of our efforts that we did not have many problems with farmers whose land was thoroughly trampled or authorities whose roads may have been wrecked by our tanks. They accommodated us to a very large degree and were quite forgiving for the damage that our troops undoubtedly inflicted on their property. What problems were raised were addressed in the SOFA Committee which I left after becoming Political Counselor. Usually, appropriate compensation was quickly dispensed keeping the political damage of these exercises at a minimum. Of course the total government control of the press and exclusures of publication on these matters helped immeasurably.

I think it is natural that an Embassy always wants more intelligence on the host government's military plans and efforts than it is able to obtain. Korea was no exception to this rule and there were times when we could certainly have used more intelligence. I remember Phil Habib—a very knowledgeable and wise observer of the Koreans—saying that Koreans were very open and friendly, but that if they want to keep some information to themselves they were very skilled in keeping it from us. I think there were many things going on within the Korean military that we never found out about or only found out about after they had occurred. Moreover, I had the feeling—despite my high regard for my military colleagues—that both military organizations—US and ROK—did not share all their knowledge with the Embassy. I cannot say that we were ever lied to, especially after Vessey became the CINC, but whether all information was shared was a different question. Jack Vessey was particularly good at giving us some insights into the ROK

military process; the fact that he shared information with the Ambassador was salutary all the way down the line; my own US military counterparts became more forthcoming. Vessey made a real effort to become better acquainted with the ROK military; he actually learned some Korean and used to give speeches, or parts of speeches, in Korean. Jack, when he was a Lieutenant Colonel, almost left the military and became a Presbyterian minister; he was a genuine, decent gentleman. He will always stand out in my memory as one of the finest individuals I have ever met. I once remarked at a farewell dinner, when I returned to Korea as DCM a few years later, that Jack Vessey taught me more about being a diplomat than anyone in the Foreign Service had done.

Let me return to the issue of what we knew about the Korean military. I had a pretty good sense about how the process worked; how promotions and assignments were made; who were the rising stars and who were “over the hill.” The potential stars were usually spotted when they were still relatively junior officers-captains or majors. Private companies had similar systems. They had invariably shined in schools and in their first assignments. They would be given some of the plusher assignments that a company might have to offer and unless they took a misstep somewhere along the line, they would rise to the top. The ROK military had a similar practice. I never heard “buying” promotions by any officers, I had always assumed that that merit and their backgrounds probably were sufficient. The “comers” certainly had better assignments. But in light of today's headlines—the Rho Tae Woo and Chun Doo Hwan bribery scandals—one has to wonder whether the promotions were made entirely on merit or connections. I think it was the consensus at the time I was in Korea in the American official community that some ROK military officers were doing well because they were being paid by private firms—for unspecified “services.” But I think no one really felt that promotions were subject to bribery; they were made on merit. That I think distinguished the Korean military from some of its Asian counterparts, where the assumption was always that officers bought their way into general officers' billets. I always thought that the Koreans had not engaged in those practices because in fact the security

of the nation depended on a well disciplined and effective military organization. Corruption under those circumstances could have been very damaging.

As in Japan and other countries, senior officials—civilian and military—were taken care of after their retirements by being offered plushy jobs in the private sector. Some of these retirees may well have been on the payroll of the private industry even before retirement. One of my close Korean friends described this process to me one day in some detail. On New Year's Day, the Chaebols—the large private megafirms—would go to the offices of the senior officials and leave a white envelope. It was a custom well known and accepted by society.

The custom of providing retirement jobs for senior military and civilian officials undoubtedly had the support of Park Chung Hee. It reduced the chances for mischief by unemployed generals—a concern that must have weighted on Park's mind who was well aware of the potential of a coup that might oust him. After all, that was the way he had come to power in 1961. It was therefore to his advantage to see to it that loyal senior officials and officers were taken care of in their retirement years. A happy, well paid person, even if retried from his first career, is not likely to jeopardize what in some cases was a rather plush second career by biting the hand that fed him. In fact, I am sure that the private sector gained from these employments as well, not only as a sign of its generosity for those who “played ball” with it during their governmental service, but also from some skills and contacts that these retired generals and officials brought with them to their new assignments. This “safety net” retirement process fit neatly the Korean culture with its emphasis on meritocracy and taking care of the seniors. As I said, to the best of my knowledge, promotions in the military were not due to pay-offs; it was a system based on performance and therefore those who rose high in the ranks were “the best and the brightest.”

I have mentioned “Kisaeng” houses on a couple of occasions. I should perhaps explain a little about what they were and the role they played in the social life of Korea. “Kisaeng” houses were male bastions where men let their “hair down—in the company of usually

very attractive young female hostesses. The Americans could not afford to go to these places, so we were always the guests of Foreign Ministry officials, sometimes the military and sometimes private sector people. I used to go two-three times each month. Some people would describe them as wild drunken orgies. Most of the time was devoted to eating, drinking, singing and playing games. Most of the stuff was in fact not very wild; I would describe the atmosphere more as warm and friendly. But these parties also served a serious purpose; I got to know a lot of Koreans that way. We as American officials, were in some respect their “rice bowls.” We were the excuse for them to enjoy themselves at the government's expense—the entertainment expense account. It is true that two or three drinks—and there were often more—tended to lower whatever social inhibitions might exist across cultural and personal lines. I don't believe that any great state secrets were made public in this fashion, but undoubtedly things were said that might not have been said in a formal office situation. But for most Americans it was a survival course. Unfortunately, I sometimes remembered the following day what had gone on to my dismay and chagrin. I had always understood Japanese Geisha affairs to be sedate and formal occasions where the “hostesses” were usually much more advanced in age than the Korean ones and where these women played instruments and were really formal entertainment. Kisaeng girls on the other hand were young and vibrant and their only job was to see that their “guests” had a good time. For the most part, the men sat cross legged on the floor and large amounts of different food dishes were served. The booze was forced on you through toasts or contests; the Koreans would constantly fill your glass and ask you to join them in some kind of “bottom ups” ceremony. The guest was made to feel that he had to drink to be courteous. If you had a good Kisaeng companion, who was trying to be helpful, she would fill your glass with barley water, which looked like Scotch, but was non-alcoholic; that helped me on many occasions. Sometimes the girls would actually drink the booze on your behalf; that was also helpful. Some of them would drink along with the men and would be drunk by the end of the evening; some of them were drunk quite often—which was not very good for their health. I think it fair to say that the American wives did not like to have their husbands go off to Kisaeng parties. They

did not appreciate either the nature of the occasions nor the fact that they were left out entirely. I think in some cases they felt their marriage threatened and in some cases they were indeed correct. I think there were Americans males who actually did enjoy these occasions; it was a heady experience, if I can use that term; the American was wined and dined with a young lady at his side. That was a different experience, although I know many Americans who did not enjoy Kisaeng parties; they particularly resented the amount of booze they were asked to consume.

The “Kisaeng” parties were one form of social occasions hosted by the Koreans, but the normal kind of social activity was much more frequent. We did a fair amount of entertainment at home and we also were invited to Korean homes. That I found one of the nice aspects of Korean life; they did invite us to their homes—more perhaps than was true in other countries where I served. Sometimes we would be invited to regular restaurants along with our wives. So the social life in Seoul was very active.

Let me now make few comments about other aspects of my job as Political Counselor. First: relations with the Station. When I first became Political Counselor, the Station Chief was Dan Arnold with whom I got along reasonably well because I made a major effort to build a cooperative relationship. He lived next door to me in Compound II. He was a strange duck; he had been a “big wheel” in the Washington headquarters and was even bigger in Laos and Thailand after his Seoul tour. His predecessor was Don Gregg, who was a great guy and a personal friend even today. Arnold was succeeded by Bob Grealy, another outstanding officer, who is also a friend of Carter's and mine to this day. I used to introduce Bob as Don Gregg's successor; that would give pause to the audience who knew that that was not factually true, but after a few seconds understood the meaning of my comment. Arnold was in general held in relatively low esteem by the Koreans; he didn't know Korean, was not sympathetic to Korea. I remember him roaring into my office one day, completely upset about something that he felt the Koreans were doing to him. He was

a Southeast Asia expert and I think felt quite uncomfortable in his Korean surroundings. He was a “fish out of water” in Seoul.

Dan Arnold or one of his staff members was at the intelligence center at Yongsan when we had a serious incident at the DMZ. I rushed to the center myself, but before I had even arrived, Arnold had heard of the incident and had reported it to Washington in a CRITIC message—one of the most sensitive designation in the US government's telegram classification system. It is used—or should be used—only in the rare cases when a major crisis is about to erupt. It would have alerted all the bureaucrats in Washington. I found out about Arnold's premature report and reported it to Ambassador Sneider. As you can well imagine, Sneider did not take it kindly; he didn't like Arnold to begin with and that report was almost the “straw that broke the camel's back.” He immediately called Arnold in and chewed him out. In the first place, the message designator was grossly over-stated; secondly, operational messages on overt activities of a military nature should not be sent through CIA channels; and thirdly, I think Sneider—and I agree with him on this—felt that such a message should never had been sent without his concurrence. Arnold lasted less than a year; his career was not damaged by his stint in Seoul, but it was not a happy experience either for him or the Embassy or the Koreans.

On the other hand, there were many positive things one could say about the CIA Station in Seoul. It was well staffed, both qualitatively and quantitatively. During my tour, they were tremendously helpful on a number of occasions. I never really worked with Don Gregg because as political-military officer, I really had no reason to have a professional relationship, but the Greggs were our next door neighbors, so that we got to know them well and I came to admire them. Don was an outstanding officer who went on to an illustrious career and eventually came back to Seoul in the late '80s as Ambassador. I did work with Bob Grealy because by that time (1976), I was the Political Counselor. Bob taught me more about what a good Station does than anyone else ever had, and I was extremely grateful to him for all the lessons. He was also a genuinely nice guy and a very capable leader of his team. He was extremely useful in ferreting out political information

about what was going on behind the scenes in South Korea which was very useful to us; that was information that we would not have otherwise acquired and helped us better understand the sometime “inscrutable” Koreans. I felt that Grealy and his staff were quite open with me with the information they had collected. I remember once asking Bob to have his people stay away from the political section's opposition friends; they were so eager to tell us openly whatever we wanted to know and it was silly for the Station to go after that information. Bob maintained that eventually these opposition leaders might come to power and therefore he should know them. I didn't want them to be tagged as CIA informers, however. This debate was indicative of the problems the US government encounters sometimes as it tries to develop the best understanding it can of political developments.

I did have someone in the Political Section who over a period of time cultivated many good contacts in the opposition. That was John La Mazza, the Labor officer. His contacts with the opposition were not necessarily part of his job description, but once he had established them, I encouraged him to proceed because he provided much useful information and some excellent analysis. Our relationship with the opposition in the late 1970s was somewhat tentative, but continual. My view was that the US was supporting the ROK government and people in so many different ways that we had a right to know what was going on the country; we were in Seoul not just to hear the well rehearsed “official party” line, but also to understand other points of view; we had the right, in my view, to talk to any Korean citizen. This view was part and parcel to my general view of human rights. I never thought that it was useful to give public support to Kim Dae Jung or other dissidents; it would not have been helpful to do so to anyone, particularly to the dissidents who already were being watched very carefully on their contacts with Americans. But I did insist that it was proper and indeed our job to talk to the opposition. Accordingly, I saw Kim Dae Jung regularly during this period.

We had indirect contact with university students through their professors. One of them, Kim Se Jung, was a professor of Constitutional Law at Seoul National University. Dan O'Donahue described him to me as a “cult figure.” I inherited him as a contact from Dan.

Physically, he was totally inept—a round man. I remember once when he tried to wrestle a Kisaeng girl to the floor. It was one of the more memorable comic experiences I had in Seoul. But he was an extremely intelligent, sensitive person who was clearly in opposition. He and others were able to keep us up to date on the mood of the university students. So we had a pretty good feel for the campus moods, which in Korea, in the '70s were an important barometer. It is true that in the period we are discussing, the students were more quiescent than they were in the following decades, but even in the 1970s they would periodically show their displeasure with some governmental action or their anti-Japanese feelings. They rarely displayed anti-American views at that time.

In Seoul I ran into a curious coincidence. I had two Yale classmates living there. One was Steve Bradner, who was a civilian political analyst working for the CINC; another one was Ed Poitras, a liberal Methodist missionary. Ed knew a lot about what was going on in the opposition; we met frequently and exchanged views and information and maintained a good relationship even though he was not always fond of US policy. I also met other American missionaries, almost all of whom were anti-Park. I saw some Korean dissidents—e.g.”Springtime” Kim. On one occasion I really pushed my policy of seeing the opposition. I consciously decided to attend a meeting of dissident leaders which was being held in sort of a tea house. I think they were very surprised by my appearance, but I thought it was a very useful way to send a message to the government about our intentions; going to such a meeting also prevented the government from taking retaliatory action against a single individual, which was always a risk if the Korean associated with us.

I don't recall ever being told by the government to cease and desist my contacts with the opposition. The ROKG may have made some protests to the Ambassador or the DCM, but I was certainly not aware of any complaints. As I said earlier, I saw Kim Dae Jung. We had a major interest in his welfare. Phil Habib's intervention saved his life after he was kidnaped by the KCIA from a Tokyo hotel. I remember that as I was making my first call on Kim—this was right after his release from jail—it suddenly occurred to me as we—I

had one of my junior staff members with me—were on our way that I had not cleared this visit with Ambassador Sneider. I went ahead anyway and had a long conversation with Kim during which I took copious notes. As soon as I returned to the Embassy, I went to see Sneider; I told him that I had just done something that I should have discussed with him first. I apologized. Sneider agreed that I should have told him first, but he was not angry at that time. Later, when I sent a report on a subsequent meeting with Kim, Sneider really got mad. I had reported on our conversation is some detail, but I had commented at the end that obviously what Kim had said had to be taken with a grain of salt since he had an axe to grind. This did not appease Sneider. His comment was that Kim was just a political hack whose comments were not worthy of reporting to Washington. That really upset me; I threw my notebook down and shouted at Sneider that Kim Dae Jung was not a “political hack”; that he was the recognized leader of the Korean opposition and that regardless of the merit of Kim's comments, they had to be reported. Sneider was not a great fan of Kim nor many of the dissidents, as a mater of fact. I had more problems on the subject of contacts with the opposition from my Ambassador than I had from the Koreans. Nevertheless Sneider saw opposition leaders himself from time to time; he was better at that than one of his successors, Dixie Walker. Dick saw them when he wanted to send a message to the government or to the opposition, although he was always quite careful which members of the opposition he did see. I don't remember for example him ever seeing Kim Dae Jung. On the other hand I saw Kim, both at his house and ours. We had a golden retriever and I remember Kim coming the first time and when he saw our dog, he began to shake visibly. That surprised me because the dog was very placid, but apparently Kim was afraid of dogs.

The only one that I guess was really safe to see was Cardinal Kim, whom I saw periodically—three or four ties a year. I thought the Cardinal was the wisest observer in Korea on domestic political issues. But you had to listen very carefully to what he said because he was a careful speaker; once I got to know him better, he was much easier to understand. He was a very important figure in Korea. He knew what was going on; the

students and the younger generation would come to his Cathedral as did the opposition leaders; so he was extremely well informed and therefore a unique source. In addition to reporting the views of the opposition, Cardinal Kim was a keen analyst. Whenever the students were beginning to reach the brink of their patience, he felt that and he moved in their direction. As the Pope's senior representative in Korea, Cardinal Kim's primary goal was to maintain a Catholic presence in Korea; so despite his own predilections, he was always careful with his words lest they damage his Church's standing. The Papal Nuncio, on the other hand, was an outright devotee of the Korean government. Cardinal Kim was recognized as a political force, and I always found his insights worthy of reporting to Washington. He was an important figure at the center of much political activity in Korea.

In the 1975-77 period, I rarely saw Kim Young Sam, the present President of Korea; I did see him frequently during my next tour in Seoul. But during that tour, I hardly ever saw Kim Dae Jung. In the case of Kim Dae Jung, in the late 1970s it was relatively easy to see him without running risk of damaging him or us further with government—as long as the contact was being conducted by the Political Counselor and not any of his superiors. In the 1980s, when I was the DCM, it would have been riskier for me see Kim Dae Jung then; it would have been greatly resented by then President Chun Doo Hwan. So during my tour as DCM, we made the conscious decision that for me to see Kim Dae Jung would have been inappropriate and risky for him. What contacts we had with Kim then were conducted by our Political Counselor, David Blakemore. In the '80s Kim was not so important an opposition contact as he had been in the late 1970s.

One of the very interesting characters that I met in the late 1970s was Chung Il Kwan, then the Speaker of the National Assembly. He was a man who had held every top job in Korea except that of President. Secondly, he was an exceedingly gracious gentleman —he was as pleasant and as a nice as anyone I ever met in Seoul, not only to me but to all Americans. I think he was an extremely effective politician in the Korean context, although he never ran for office. He was well liked by most; he was always surrounded by an entourage of followers—the famous “Tuesday Golf” game that I mentioned earlier

was essentially a Chung creation. But despite his Buddha-like exterior, you had the feeling that he was probably a ruthless man. There were many stories about his misdeeds, including one about a young lady who he had sent to her death at an earlier stage of his life—she was pregnant and probably had tried to extort something out of Chung. He had served as Army Chief of Staff three times and undoubtedly had learned some lessons in brutality from those experiences. Chung was also considered corrupt and corrupting. I can remember a young opposition politician—Oh Se Young—(a personal friend) playing golf with Chung and coming back five hundred dollar richer. Chung always let these young politicians win their golf games and always paid them off—enough so they could have a good time that evening. But I am sure that he was involved in much larger corrupt schemes. The Chairman of Hyundai, Chung Ju Jung, was close to the Speaker and must have financed him.

The economic assistance program was essentially phasing out while I was in Seoul and was not much of a factor in our strategy. USIA which occupied a building several blocks away from the Chancery was headed by experienced PAO's. They also had three branch offices throughout South Korea, which were useful in bringing the US to cities other than Seoul. There was also an active program to engage University students which I thought was useful. So there were parts of the USIA program that were important, although I think in general, the Agency perhaps was not as influential on the Korean scene as other US programs like military assistance. Security issues were paramount in Korea and USIA is not a very good foreign policy instrument in such a setting. I think we were also limited in our outreach program because fluency in Korean was absolutely essential and there were not that many officers in the Embassy—me included—that could satisfy that requirement.

I should make some comments about my external contacts. I had never worked as a political officer and therefore learned on the job. I developed a good relationship with Philip Choi who was a brother of another good friend of ours. Philip was in the office of the “Protocol Chief” to the President of the ROK and therefore was very knowledgeable about what was going on in the Blue House. I suspect that protocol had very little to do with his

job; he was more likely to have been a liaison officer with the KCIA. I also met one or two of the younger Blue House secretaries—[the name given to staffers], usually on social occasions which I would then follow up with regular business contact. These contacts did give me some fodder for some of my reports, although these guys were obviously quite circumspect. It was my impression that the Blue House ran quite efficiently; I always had the feeling that the cream of the Korean brain power worked at the top of the bureaucracy and in the Blue House. They knew precisely what they were doing. Of course, Korea not being a democracy reduced the amount of debates on issues; the President would decide and his staff would carry out his orders. After becoming the Political Counselor, I had several opportunities to see Park Chung Hee because I was the note taker at the meetings he held with the Ambassador. There was no question who was in charge; clearly everyone marched to Park's tune. As a newcomer to meetings with Chiefs of State, there was a certain aura and atmosphere about being in the presence of the President; it left a definite impression. Park was a stern, severe person; his military demeanor never left him. I also remember Park as being very quick; if he wanted to answer an Ambassadorial question, he would do so incisively and directly; he didn't ramble and gave a succinct and responsive answer. Park was smart, but not a friendly and warm type.

I had some contact with the neutral observers on the Armistice Commission, especially the Swedes and the Swiss. We used to see them socially quite often. As time went on, we also became acquainted with the Polish and Czech members. That was useful to us because they were in constant contact with the North Koreans and could provide some insights into the mentality of the forces on the other side of the DMZ. The Commission, staffed by representatives of “neutral” countries, was established to monitor the armistice. It could not enforce the provisions of the treaty, but it did have oversight responsibility and reported violations to both sides. In some cases, the Commission was useful in mediating some sticky points or situations. It would be used by both sides as a message transmission belt. In one case that I remember (in the '80s), the Swedish delegate played a personal physical role in saving the lives of some North Korean soldiers who had

invaded the “Peace Village” at Panmunjom. They were in pursuit of a Russian defector—a diplomat—and crossed the border in their effort to stop the defection. As soon as they crossed the line, they were pinned down by South Korean forces. So the North soldiers fond themselves in a little depression in the ground surrounded by the South Koreans. It was very tense situation which could have easily resulted in casualties. Fortunately, the Swedish delegate stepped in and rescued the North Koreans before any damage was done, much to his own peril.

During my tour as Political Counselor, I had a little contact with some American correspondents, such as Don Oberdorfer, Dick Halloran and Sam Jameson. All of these correspondents were based in Tokyo, but would periodically come to Seoul and drop in on me for update briefings. Only the “Wall Street Journal” had a resident correspondent and I of course saw him frequently. All my briefings were “on background”—i.e. not for attribution—and focused primarily on the Korean domestic scene, with some reference, when called for, on the military situation. I was as forthcoming as possible when the correspondents would call on me. In general, Sneider encouraged these press briefings; I never felt any constraints. The only time I ever felt any restriction was when Habib was Ambassador. He was a curious mixture of greatness and pettiness. At one time, there was a press description about some event in Seoul that didn't fit his views of the situation; then Phil almost made the Embassy out of bounds for correspondents. I didn't have any argument at the time with Habib's reaction; as a matter of fact, at the time I was somewhat surprised that ambassadors had been as open with press as many of them were. As time went on, I learned that talking to the press was of benefit. A closed embassy was bound to be pilloried in the press; that might have been more trouble than it was worth.

Let me talk a little about our policies toward Korea in 1975-77. I have already indicated that our major objective was to deter any attack on South Korea. It was clear that Habib's maxim “if war breaks out, the US has lost” was still our cardinal rule. We recognized that Korea was the most volatile area of the world and the most likely to be the casus belli if there was one anywhere. There were other points such as Berlin, but the major

powers had much greater control of situations of that kind than they had in Korea. The unpredictable nature of the situation particularly of the North was a matter of great concern. As I have said, I had some degree of confidence that the North was not about to launch a major offensive; that was based primarily on the US maintenance of a credible deterrence; it required the US to be seen as staunch and firm in purpose. I had absolutely no quarrel with our basic objective; I had always understood it even before coming to Korea and there was nothing that I saw in the three years that changed my mind. I believed in our basic purpose and do so still today. That is the reason that I had serious doubts about President Carter's troop withdrawal policy. Sneider's approach—i.e. to say to the President that if he had really decided to withdraw the troops, then there were ways to minimize the damage—I now view as probably misguided. I didn't at the time, but in retrospect, Sneider probably should have said “No way.” Vessey, as I heard, actually returned to Washington and had a meeting with the President during which he outlined all the reasons why troop withdrawal was a very dangerous policy. He was up front about his opposition to troop withdrawal. As I said, in retrospect, I think Vessey's approach was far better than Sneider's, but at the time, I probably was too deferential to the Ambassador because I was still a relatively new boy on the block and had not had enough experience with Far East security issues to be able to muster a telling counter-argument to Sneider's approach. I think most of us just followed our leader.

I have already alluded to our human rights policy. I felt then as I did when I returned to Korea in the early 1980s that the protection of human rights was an important issue for the US, particularly as it impinged on people's rights to achieve a democratic society. People have the right to be the masters of their own fate and we were completely justified in supporting such aspirations. I always opposed the repressive measures that the Korean military sometimes took, which resulted in people jumping to their deaths out of windows, or the KCIA kidnaping of Kim Dae Jung. Those actions were beyond the pale and I found myself quite angry at such brutal Korean measures. On the other hand, I did not believe that active US public promotion of human rights, which tended to embarrass a foreign

government, was the most effective means of achieving our goal. It seemed to me that US tactics would only result in Park Chung Hee becoming more hard-nosed. His position that Korea needed a tough dictatorship to maintain a united front against the North was probably accepted by most Koreans particularly when it was combined with a highly centralized economic strategy which was producing an “economic miracle”. My view was that while I was deeply sympathetic with the human rights movement in Korea—which I insisted had a right to be heard and which was one of the reasons that I insisted that I be seen with some of the opposition—public flogging of the government's record on human rights would only increase repression and tensions. I have always felt that the best approach was to let democracy evolve. The middle class was clearly growing and the economic growth of South Korea almost guaranteed an ever increasing middle class. Much of that middle class was well educated and its members were no fools; they knew what they were doing and I was certain they eventually would claim a seat or seats at the policy making table. I felt democracy in Korea should be permitted to evolve at the pace that this middle class itself set; we should not—and perhaps even could not—accelerate that drive to democracy. Even if we were able to step up the time table, I thought that democracy might come too early—prematurely perhaps—which might set it back to a much more distant future than a natural evolution might. I have been gratified to be a witness to the playing out of the scenario just as I had hoped; in fact, democracy came to Korea in a bloodless and peaceful fashion, almost unperceptable until it had reached fruition.

While Political Counselor, I had to make demarches to the Foreign Ministry on some human rights issue or another under instructions from Washington. Some time, I would make lower level protest and the Ambassador or the DCM would make them at a higher level. I felt that most of the time, out protestations would fall on deaf ears and that our approaches were pro forma, although on several occasions we were seeking a favorable outcome on a specific violation—e.g. the imprisonment of a Korean dissident. In many such cases, after a while, the Koreans did release the individual in question. I didn't

recognize it full at the time, but the Director of North American Affairs in the Foreign Ministry was a deeply religious man; I think he was probably more sympathetic to our approaches than many of his superiors. So I suspect that he was helpful to us in many of these individual cases.

I should note that one of the problems we faced in Korea was that we were perceived by many as the “big brother” with all the obligations that such a relationship carried, particularly in a Confucian society. The Koreans were willing to show obeisance to their “big brother”, but they expected that we show some understanding of our role in such a relationship. It was the obligations that the Koreans would mention most often. This perception often struck us as unwarranted.

This relationship is not one that we sought; it was one that the Koreans themselves either wished for or perceived. It was the way the Koreans operated; it was part of the Korean Confucian heritage which placed relationships in a familial context. We did not think in those terms. Secondly, the Koreans would always hold us accountable for having “deserted” them in 1905 and many times afterwards. They would try to place that guilt on the West; after a while, it got to be “old hat” and we came to ignore these views in a sense. I was always mindful and respectful of Korean views, but every once in a while, especially if I had been relaxed by some drinks, I would tell my Korean friends what I really thought of their attitudes toward us. No American knew where Korea was in 1905; it would be highly improbable that we then knew anything about the Japanese occupation or that we really cared. But even my temporary outbursts would not deter the Koreans from their long established cultural views of the world; they just continued to try to play on our guilt. In the Foreign Ministry and in the Ministry of Defense, however, those cultural perceptions never interfered with us conducting business in a work-man like fashion; the officials were professional and had a good sense of reality.

During the 1973-77 period, I think there was always a strong feeling in Korea that we and they were allies in maintaining stability on the peninsula. I learned that catechism from Phil

Habib; it seemed to me that, unlike the human rights issue, there should never have been any evolution of our stated purpose to defend the Republic of Korea. That was our first, second and third objective; we should always be the South's ally and should never allow ourselves to be sucked into a brokered deal, like Vietnam. I felt then, as I did in my second tour, that we should never make concessions to the North Koreans; it would have been a foolhardy venture. I believed that we should stand firmly with the South and not fall for the efforts of the North and others to separate us. (While I think that posture was appropriate in the mid to late 1970s; that posture may not be as applicable today.) The South Koreans were always nervous about a US-North Korea bilateral negotiation; they were almost paranoid about that possibility and always reminded us how unhappy they would be in such an eventuality. Sometime these concerns arose in the context of the truce talks at Panmunjom; any concessions made there seemed to the South Koreans to be alien to their culture which demanded that there be an “eye for an eye”; e.g., if the North had its flag a little higher on the negotiating table, then the South would have to increase the height of its flag to be taller. We viewed these extreme positions to be somewhat nonsensical, but they were deeply ingrained in Korean culture. I think that Americans, being more pragmatic, would from time to time tend to make small concessions on DMZ issues, although I think all concessions were minuscule—more form than substance. But whenever we make these tiny concessions, the South Koreans were noticeably nervous; in fact, they were downright outspoken about their fears that we would walk away from them—as “you did in 1905.” I would always tell my Korean friends that we had never heard of 1905; I am not sure that made them feel any better because they genuinely feared that we would somehow leave them in the lurch or at least deal with the North behind their backs.

That is not to say that the South Koreans did not have reason for concern. In their eyes, the future of a free South Korea depended on steadfast support from the US which could not be mistaken by the North. A tight relationship between the US and the ROK—which left no room for even the smallest opening—was central to their survival. The North was

viewed as the real enemy and concern. I always thought that the South Koreans probably understood their “brothers” in the North better than anyone else; after all, they were kinfolk. I think if the North-South shoes had been reversed, the South would have taken the same strategy as the North tried—i.e. to wean us away from the ROK—”splittist tactics”, is the term that was often used. The two were mirror images of each other. I have never thought that there was much difference between a North and a South Korean, if you look under the skin of the North's communism. They were all from the same cultural framework and besides the nature of their regimes, they were very much alike—all “nationalists” to the core. We had another triangular relationship apart from the US, South and North Korea one and that was the US-Japan-ROK relationship. The latter triangle had two very good aspects and one less desirable—tension filled dimension. The positive aspects were the US relationship with Japan and the US relationship with South Korea. These were solid as they had been for many decades, despite the occasional frictions and the cultural gaps that had to be filled all the time. It was recognized then as it is today that the US-Japan relationship was the most important link we had in the Pacific area. The Korea relationship, although not as multi-faceted and as extensive as the US-Japan one, was also critical because of the tenuous peace that ruled the peninsula.

The relationship between Japan and South Korea on the other hand was not good. The two countries maintained working relations. They had many similarities in their administration and organization and legal framework the Korean TV programs were copied from Japanese models. But basically, Japanese and Koreans are entirely different people and in the 1970s they appeared to hate each other. There was a great deal of understanding between the two countries. But no love. That put us in the middle, trying as best we could, to force the two to improve their relationship so that we could operate more effectively. We needed the cooperation of the two not only with us but with each other.

The tensions really built up when Madame Park was assassinated. We had to work hard to minimize the friction; Dick Ericson worked very hard and diligently to calm the waters as best he could. There were times during the 1973-77 period when we had to work as

intermediaries, as Dick Ericson undoubtedly describes in his own oral history. Even when I became Political Counselor and after Dick's departure, there were occasions when we would have to intercede with the Korean government to calm waters or lobby for some Japanese policy.

We had constant contact with Japanese diplomats in Seoul. We consciously developed a policy that permitted us—in fact encouraged us—to discuss the Korean domestic scene with the Japanese representatives to make sure that we were all on the same wave length. We traded information with the Japanese which was useful to us as well because they had insights that we did not have. Most of this work was done by me with my counterpart in the Japanese Embassy; I used to have lunch with him regularly. Later, in the 1980s, those lunches were held at the Ambassadorial level, but in the 1973-77 period, I used to see the Japanese Political Counselor about once a month. I also found those sessions rewarding and interesting for the Japanese had different perspectives than we had. Most conversations dealt with political issues including human rights, but occasionally we would discuss security matters. I think our discussions were generally free and wide open. On a couple of occasions, I went to Tokyo to talk to our people there as well as the Japanese Foreign Office; it was mostly a matter of comparing notes and making sure that the American Embassy in Tokyo was up to date. I believed that it was important for the stability of Northeast Asia that the US and Japan cooperate as much as possible in Korean issues and that we sing from the same sheet of music, even though the Japanese did not have as much influence in Seoul as we did. We knew a lot more about what was going on in Korea, at least in certain areas, particularly the security related ones. So we kept them reasonable well informed without stepping over the line of propriety on military matters.

Let me now refer to some specific events that occurred in the 1973-77 period. The first that comes to mind was the Kim Dae Jung kidnaping from Tokyo by the KCIA. I had been in Seoul for a little over a month and was the politico-military officer. So I was not directly involved, but I was certainly interested in the incident. It became clear soon to Habib and others that the KCIA was the master-mind behind the kidnaping. Phil has been credited by

those who should know with responsibility for saving Kim's life. He intervened personally in his usual forceful way and pointed out the damage that any retribution on Kim would do to US-ROK relations. I recall that later I talked to Kim Dae Jung about his experiences of August 1973 and the aftermath. He attributed his salvation to divine intervention which seemed somewhat mystical to me. But he believed in it, along with Habib's intervention; he always felt very much in debt to the Ambassador and Americans in general for the rescue. As I have mentioned, when I became Political Counselor, I met with Kim several times and befriended him.

Then there was Madame Park's assassination in August 1974. I was still the politico-military officer; Habib was leaving, as was Dan O'Donahue. But I remember that incident very clearly because it happened right in the middle of Seoul in a ceremonial hall. Habib witnessed the whole incident and gave us a detailed report when he returned to the Embassy. What impressed me the most was the newsreels taken which covered every aspect of the incident. You could clearly see a person running toward the stage and when shots began to ring out, everyone on the stage dove for cover except Madame Park, who kept sitting straight in her chair and was therefore an easy target, and Park Chung Kyu, the head of the Presidential Protective Force, who came forward from behind Park Chung Hee and fired into the audience, thereby killing an innocent witness—a teen age school girl, I think. It may have been a brave act, but a rash one which resulted in the death of an innocent bystander. The assassin—a Korean who lived in Japan—was immediately apprehended; he presumably had been employed by the North to kill Park Chung Hee.

Of course, when these facts became known, there were massive demonstration in front of the Japanese Chancery which happened to be close to ours. So we got a lot of pepper fog. One of the secretaries in the Political Section became furious with me because she was convinced that I had opened my window better to see what was going on; in fact I had kept them shut tightly, but even so the pepper fog seeped through and we had to deal with it. The crowds were not only large but also irate; they couldn't get to the Chancery very well because its entrance was on a small alley—it had been built that way on purpose just

for such occasions. But one day, I was told that one person in the crowd cut off his finger and threw it into the Chancery courtyard. That tells you a little about the level of anger. We were not the target at any time of the mob's anger, which I welcomed with some relief.

Student demonstrations were another visible sign of Korean discontent. As the politico-military officer, I was not directly involved, but I did discuss the possible ramification of those demonstrations with our military command. I was particularly interested in the issue of “operational control”; and the right of the CINCUNC, the American four star general to bar the use of Korean troops under his command from taking certain actions in a peace time situation. As I recall, almost all Korean forces were under the UN command, although there may have been some disparate units that were directly and solely under the command of the Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff. I believe that the documented rules specifically stated that the UN command would have to relinquish control over Korean forces. The written ground rules were quite specific about “operational control”—its applicability, its enforcement and the means to be used to relinquish it for certain or all Korean forces. I don't remember us ever relinquishing “operational control”; I believe that whenever in the post WW II period the Korean troops operated under their own command—if they had been assigned to the UN command—they did so unilaterally without CINCUNC blessing.

The precedent for dealing with students was taken in 1960-61 when the series of major demonstrations took place. The Korean military forces at that time essentially detached themselves from “operational control”—unilaterally, as I recall being told. Those military detachments then were sent to confront the students in an effort to minimize violence—which was often generated by military actions in the first place. The question of peace time “operational control” had then and for decades thereafter become a major issue which at times was always contentious even though on paper there seemed to be some firm guidelines. I recall that I was told that in the 1960 period we were very disturbed by the Korean unilateral action. Korean military units just decided that at least for the period of the student unrest, they would not be under the control of the UNCINC and operated

under the instructions of their own military commanders. The Korean military behavior in 1960 left considerable residual concern among the US military because we did not want to be held responsible for acts we could not control. In the mid-1980s, the US military was concerned about the possibility of a repeat unilateral withdrawal of Korean troops from the UN command. After reviewing the issue, we generally concluded that there was very little a CINCUNC could do if the Koreans wanted to abandon “operational control” beyond jawboning. It was clear that Park Chung Hee, if he thought that his regime was in danger, would withdraw the troops from the UN command and use them to subdue any civilian unrest. We also came to the conclusion that the precedent of 1960 established clearly that the Korean troops might shoot at students once, if they had to, but never twice. If ordered to shoot a second time, those troops were very likely to mutiny. So the use of Korean troops in a situation of domestic uprising was limited because they were not reliable “keepers of the peace”—they were not likely to kill their countrymen, after perhaps a first warning volley. Those were the two conclusions I recall that the US command reached at the time.

Let me just briefly mention Tongsun Park and “Koreagate”. The apex of that story really took place after I left Korea, but being in Washington, I followed those events closely. I knew Tongsun Park personally; I had met him several times and we attended some social events at the Georgetown Club that he started and owned. I knew his brother, Ken Park, very well; I played golf with him often. Ken unfortunately committed suicide later. He was extremely wealthy. Tongsun was a real “smoothie”—a con man who had to be watched carefully; he was not trusted by the American community in Seoul. I think everyone suspected Tongsun Park of some kind of nefarious activities; he was just too slick. I wasn't responsible for Washington participation in the Justice Department investigation; that action rested with the Korea desk and Bob Rich—its chief.

Now let me turn to August 1976 and the murder of two American officers in the DMZ. As soon as I heard about it, I headed for Yongsan to the command post. As I mentioned earlier, this came as second nature to me; any problem in the DMZ would sent me

racing to the command center. I set up a post, so to speak, in Stilwell's outer office. I was concerned from the beginning that Stilwell was taking a very hard line and preparing a retaliatory strike. In a way I did not blame him. I well remember that photographs of the murdered officers came to the office; they were horrendous because these guys had been beaten to death. I had never seen such brutality in my life. It was a very tense situation. I immediately phoned Washington—Phil Mayhew, the deputy director of the office of Korean Affairs. I also called Tom Stern, the Charg# to bring him up to date. But Stilwell's view was of increasing concern to me. I felt that this was the kind of situation that cried for civilian control in Seoul and Washington. I don't remember Stilwell ever issuing orders for retaliatory action, but he was certainly planning for something—and rather quickly. My continual reporting by phone was welcomed in Washington where obviously many people were seeking information.

At one point, Stilwell became quite angry because he found out that I was reporting events in real time. I explained to him that I was on the phone with my colleague in the Department in Washington; he really could not object to that. I do not remember in any detail what Stilwell's plans were, but it became later clear that he was moving further and faster than Washington wished. I think it was clear to Washington that Stilwell was moving ahead of the policy planners. To the best of my recollection, Stilwell was preparing to have troops move north toward the DMZ, ready to take action. I was most concerned about Stilwell's mindset more than his actions. From the beginning, I agreed that the North had obviously exceeded acceptable limits, but the US military's posture seemed one of revenge. I had serious doubts about that approach in an already abnormally tense situation. Subsequently, a couple of weeks later, Sneider returned from vacation and then there was some “strong” dialogue between the Ambassador and the CINC.

I certainly had no objections to the Command's wish, expressed almost from the beginning, to restart the tree cutting effort. It was clear to me that we had to enforce our rights in the DMZ and that meant going back to the tree and cutting the limbs that were

obstructing our view. That was a perfectly legal activity and I think it was right and proper that we follow up on it and finish the job.

I think people have to understand that in this instance the first 24-48 hours were primarily devoted to fact gathering. The first information received was certainly fragmented and it took the Command some time to nail down the sequence of events. But I remained at the command post off and on for several days, monitoring and reporting the information that was being collected and the plans of the military. I was certainly in accord with the Command on finishing the tree trimming exercise, but I was very reluctant to see us go beyond that, unless further provoked by North Korean troops. The Command was right in being prepared to take further action if provoked, but I did not think it appropriate for us to do anything more initially then to finish the tree trimming task.

I have some recollection of Stilwell being quite frustrated by the short-leash that Washington had placed on him. In fact, the Command was on the phone continually to JCS, which dictated every troop movement. I think that tight control stemmed from Washington's early awareness of the tense situation that had developed on the Korean Peninsula. I think Washington was also very aware of the risks involved in any precipitous action and the need to move in a deliberate and thoughtful way. I mentioned that when Sneider returned from vacation (he was ordered back by Phil Habib), there was a confrontation between him and Stilwell. Dick Sneider was highly agitated and very determined from the minute he landed in Seoul that he would now take charge of the US policy and operations in Korea. This attitude was consistent with Dick's general view of his role in Seoul to begin with; furthermore, I don't think he was too happy to have his precious summer vacation disrupted. I remember quite clearly the first meeting that Sneider and Stilwell held after Dick's return from Washington. It took place in the CINC's bunker. There were, I believe, at least 25 people in the room, including a number of Korean generals. The Korean military were sitting along one side of a rectangular table; Sneider sat directly on the opposite side. Stilwell occupied one other side and his staff sat opposite him. Stilwell began with a briefing; he then went on to talk about his views.

At that point Sneider exploded; he was “loaded for bear”. He obviously intended to take control of the situation and to make it clear to everyone that he was in charge of all US operation in Korea. As I said, he erupted in anger and then Stilwell responded in kind. At that point, a colonel—whom I considered to be one of the smartest US officers I had ever met—who was standing behind Stilwell in the doorway, intervened. He suggested that the meeting be adjourned and that Sneider and Stilwell continue their confrontation privately in an adjoining room. That took the principals aback; but they agreed and went into the separate room. I considered the colonel's intervention not only appropriate, but also courageous since he publicly reminded the two principals that their public behavior was not really appropriate. So Sneider and Stilwell—alone—retired to the back room; I suspect that Sneider continued to emphasize his predominance; Stilwell had no choice except to acquiesce; he had to acknowledge that the Ambassador was the personal representative of the President and therefore the top dog in the country. I think that session put issues back on the track and after that, we didn't have any more reservations about the CINC and his views. I can well remember the faces of the Korean officers to whom civilian control of the military was a foreign concept; in Korea in those days, the roles were reversed. So they were surprised and amazed by the exchange between the Ambassador and the CINC. I have no doubt that Park Chung Hee had a full report of what had transcribed within minutes of the meeting breaking up. I don't think anyone could have left the Command that day with any doubts on the role of a civilian ambassador even in a semi-military situation.

I could not know who had actually ordered the attack on the American military contingent that was sent to trim the tree. The question of whether it was just a sergeant or whether it came from higher up is still unknown today, but I had no doubt that the attack was planned before the event ever took place. The North Korean troops had been brought to the site in a truck, who at someone's command jumped out and set upon the American contingent with axe handles. It was obviously a calculated move which had not been decided on the spur of the moment; in any case, the North Korean action was a serious breach of the

Armistice Agreement. The provision of that Agreement clearly gave us the authority to trim or remove any obstruction of our view of all areas within Panmunjom, (the Peace Village). The tree had grown and spread so that our observers could not view the “Bridge of No-Return” and the guard boxes that were placed at the bridge. Our military had notified the North Koreans ahead of time of our intentions and the reasons for our action. There may have been some objections from the North—I believe that the tree all of a sudden became “holy” and therefore untouchable, but we were well within our legal rights to trim the tree.

So it was not surprising that our contingent was taken by surprise by these North Korean troops—at least a dozen of them. It was an illegal and brutal act by the North Koreans—fully captured on film by the way—which resulted in the death of two American officers who were beaten with ax handles. I have no doubt that it was planned and prepared by the North Koreans. But I don't believe that any of us had any solid information to estimate who had given the orders. I think, even today, that the order probably came from fairly senior levels. North Korean sergeants do not take actions of this nature on their own. It was an incident that drew world attention and concern and I think it must have been authorized fairly high in the chain of command.

The whole incident was concluded essentially by us finishing the tree trimming. Tensions cooled after we had taken action, although we were prepared for the worst when our troops went back in with their shears and saws. Of course, the word “cooled” has to be seen in the DMZ context where tensions always ran high. For example, the DMZ is a border which the North tried to bypass by digging tunnels under it. That would have been an unusual effort in any part of the world, but in Korea it was particularly egregious. I was there when the first tunnel was found. That discovery came about when someone observed plumes of hot air rising from the ground; that air had seeped through the layer of earth above the tunnel where it was warmer. In fact a small cloud went straight across the DMZ; that suggested that something unnatural was taking place, and led the UNCINC troops to the tunnel that was being dug under the DMZ. Presumably the North hoped to use them to infiltrate their troops unnoticed in the South. The first one, I believe came

out just south of the DMZ; the ones found later exited a considerable distance behind the DMZ. This discovery raised immediate interest and concern, not only about the one found but about other tunnels which may still have been undiscovered. Through the use of listening devices and other means, we soon found other tunnels in various stages of completion. The finding of these new tunnels was the result of very intensive detection efforts. We did learn that finding a small tunnel was very much like looking for a needle in a haystack. We did find some, but no one can really be sure that all have been found, even today.

I can remember Stilwell having a long discussion with some Italian archeologist who had spent his lifetime looking for catacombs in Rome. I reported that conversation with some amusement. I think Stilwell was deeply interested because the archeologist brought some expertise to the challenge of finding tunnels. As it turned out, finding catacombs in Rome was not entirely applicable to tunnels under the DMZ. The catacombs were huge when compared to the narrow tunnels that the North was digging. The existence of tunnels remained a US concern, although by the time I returned to Korea in the early 1980s, I think everyone had accepted the existence of the tunnels and the continued search for these tunnels was no longer the head-line news that the first or even the first few had become. The discovery of tunnels became a big business. Some outfit had been established which spent its full time on searching and finding tunnels. It was the typical military approach; if there is a problem, you just set aside some resources to try to rectify the situation. I visited the tunnel-searchers one time with our Ambassador.

I never went into a tunnel. That would have been a violation of the Armistice Agreement. Nevertheless, the military developed a whole program of visitations to the tunnels. It was partly a tourist attraction, but I think it was used primarily as a propaganda device to bring to the attention of the visitors the nefarious ways of the North; the briefings emphasized the perfidy of our “adversary”. Both Ed Hurwitz and I objected to the military's approach to this issue, but we were ignored. It was our view that civilians in the DMZ were a violation of the Armistice Agreement and that we should stick to the letter of the law. It is true that

the North was violating that Agreement, but that was no excuse for us to do the same thing. But the desires of the Command prevailed, in part because Sneider was really not concerned about what the military was doing. We did I think manage to convince our Embassy colleagues not to visit the tunnels, even though I am sure the Command would have been glad to bring us to the tunnels. But as far as I know, no one in the Embassy at that time violated the Agreement by visiting the tunnels. I still think that bringing civilians to the tunnels was inappropriate, particularly when these visits were used for propaganda purposes. Later, these tunnels became major tourist attractions, the ROK developed the sites into regular stops for tours.

We did take VIPs to the DMZ so that they could get a feel for the situation. When General Hollingsworth commanded I Corps, those tours which included his personal briefings were spectacular. We would take the visitor to the DMZ and move from outlook to outlook by helicopter, escorted by Holly. I will never forget standing on one outlook, on top of a mountain peak, overlooking the Chorwon Valley—which was the route that we anticipated the North would use if it ever decided on an invasion of the South. Holly pointed to the valley and said in his booming, gruff voice,: “That, gentlemen, is where we will murder the bastards!!!”. He did that with such relish and enthusiasm that all his audience would also get excited and were themselves ready to plunge into the valley to defend the South. It was a great show! Holly was a very skilled briefer; he could convince even the most ardent opponents of our presence in Korea that he and his men were the only thing that stood between freedom and a return to the Dark Ages. There were very few skeptics left after Holly's briefings. I must admit that when Hollingsworth first arrived to take over his command, I was concerned because I was afraid that he would be too aggressive. He had made his reputation in Vietnam where he had dropped more ammunition on the town of An Loch than had been used since the WW II bombing of Berlin. He was indeed proud of his achievements. In fact that was his approach to battle—overwhelm the enemy with a raging storm of ammunition. In fact, when he became the I Corps commander, he revised the battle plans to reflect his view of how the war was to be conducted. Stilwell approved

those plans which were a sharp departure from the past because they called for a “forward defense”—i.e. meeting the enemy with overwhelming force at the point of his attack into the South. The Koreans warmly endorsed the concept because it provided at least some hope of reducing the damage to Seoul. The old plans—based on a “defense in depth” strategy—in fact would have meant Seoul's destruction. Holly wanted to drive the North back before it could reach Seoul and rain severe damage on the city. Seoul was the heart of South Korea; so a strong defense of it was certainly most welcomed.

I took visitors to the DMZ even when I was the DCM, later in the '80s. The substance of the briefings was roughly the same. The major difference was in the truce village itself. When I first served in Korea, the entire area was open to all who were in the Panmunjom area—both North Koreans and Americans. That situation changed as result of the tree trimming incident. A line was negotiated which separated the village into two sections: one reserved for the North and one for us. Neither side was then permitted to cross that line. I think the drawing of the line and the separation of forces made a deep impression on every visitor. It was a visible sign of tensions, which could erupt without warning. The potential for confrontation which could spread quickly was certainly palpable. That of course was one of the reasons we used to take visitors to Panmunjom; it was to impart to them the concern that we felt about the dicey situation in Korea. It was not done for propaganda purposes, but we did want to ensure that the Washington visitors—whether from the Executive or Legislative Branches—could experience first hand the tensions as we saw them. The North Korean observers would sit in their tower and take pictures of all visitors. Both sides would use binoculars to watch each other; every one peered at each other.

In the middle of the village there were some huts. One was used by the Armistice Commission for its meetings. On each side of the conference table, stood a flag. I think I mentioned before that those flags were the subject of a competition to see which would be taller. It was a silly kind of competition, but a visible indicator of the animosity that existed between North and South. There was a lot of those small incidents when one side would

do something and the other side would try to top it. When that game was played long enough, both sides would eventually accept a new balance. I attended a few Armistice meetings; the North was on one side with a Chinese observer sitting at the end of their side of the table. The US was represented by an Admiral, sitting opposite the North side, with his staff arrayed along side of him, including some South Korean representatives and interpreters. The meetings were really staged; that is, the texts were prepared ahead of time and neither side veered very far off its usually narrow instructions. The North was always very strident and uncompromising, giving it a bad image that we used to portray in our briefings.

I should make some comments about my recollections of the South's missile program. Some missiles and rockets were developed by the South, without our assistance. It was a program that was of some concern to us. We did bring LANCE missiles into South Korea; that missile was a dual purpose weapon—i.e. it could be used with a regular warhead or a nuclear one. Our missile was a proven weapon system; the South Korean ones were all experimental. I am not sure that they ever developed a working model which was just as well because we felt sure that the South was also developing a capacity to build a nuclear weapon. Had it been able to develop both a missile and a nuclear weapon, that would have changed the situation on the Peninsula; therefore we were greatly concerned about both development programs. I remember discussing with General O.D. Street, the JUSMAAG chief, the desirability of providing short range missiles to the South Koreans. Those missiles would not have been able to reach Pyongyang and would therefore have been less destabilizing than the ones that the South Koreans were trying to develop themselves. There was some hope that if we provided the short range ones that might stop the Korean development effort for longer range ones. I should make it clear that the South Korean missile and nuclear capability development efforts were surreptitious; all we knew about them we had learned from intelligence sources. As far as I can remember, we never did provide missile assistance to the ROK because it would have involved providing drawings and plans as well as actual systems; that was going too far.

The nuclear issue arose soon after I became the Political Counselor. The question we faced was how we could get the Koreans to cease and desist in their experimental nuclear development program, which we had learned about through CIA intelligence collection. The ROK was trying to build a nuclear device. I believe that they were working on this program in Duduk, a town they had built for scientific and technical development efforts. To build a nuclear device—or even to develop one—depended on a supply of plutonium —enriched uranium. We suspected that the Koreans intended to get the material from a reprocessing plant which they had ordered from the French. The raw material would come from the waste generated by the nuclear power plants which Westinghouse had and was building. Then that waste would be reprocessed and would as one of its products generate plutonium. We had no doubt about the reliability of the information we had received. The Korean source had been developed by a CIA officer. The recruitment was an extraordinary success.

There was no doubt in our minds that we had to prevent the South from starting any such nuclear development program. At the same time, we did not want to make this an open confrontation between our countries; we did not want to embarrass the ROK. But the fact that the Koreans had to procure the reprocessing plant from the French gave us an opportunity to derail the development program. Sneider started a series of conversations, starting with the Science Minister and going on to other involved ministries in an effort to stop the procurement. At first, we were met with polite, but non-committal response. The Korean ploy was to question why the US was so interested in what was essentially a domestic issue—a reprocessing plant. I went with Sneider to all of his meetings with the ministers, except the last one, which he held with the Secretary General, who next to Park Chung Hee was the highest ranking official in the Blue House. He told me after that meeting that he had told the SG that US-ROK relations were at stake and a Korean procurement would require a US reassessment of that relationship. If the South Koreans had had any doubt about our concern, that meeting with the SG would have put them to rest. We were greatly concerned and I think we made it very clear to the Koreans.

Our conversations also, I think, made it clear that we knew why the Koreans were so anxious to procure this reprocessing plant. Only an issue of the magnitude of a nuclear device development program would have brought such a strong response from the US. Through this process of consultation, we did not openly confront the Koreans; all of our conversations were private and therefore when the Koreans finally decided to cancel their procurement, “face” was not at stake and that made it much easier for them to back away. I learned subsequently that in fact, although the reprocessing plant procurement was canceled, the Koreans did continue a very small and modest nuclear development program, but without a source for the basic ingredient, they could not develop a device.

I should also mention that following Sneider's negotiations, we entered into a scientific agreement with the Koreans, which was a “fig leaf” that enabled the Koreans to show something for giving up the reprocessing plant. Sneider signed that agreement with the Minister of Science and Technology. I have a picture of that ceremony which has some amusing aspects to it. Everyone in the picture—the Science Minister, the Deputy Foreign Minister, Sneider and I—have the sourest expression that I have ever seen in a group portrait. I think it was just by accident that the cameraman caught us all with our dourest expressions on, but it was reflective of the view of both sides—the Koreans were bitter and we were not very elated ourselves.

Beyond our general reluctance to accept nuclear proliferation, the discussion was also stimulated by our concern for the ROK taking offensive action against the North. All Koreans after all, regardless whether they lived north or south of the DMZ, were Koreans. They are aggressive people and if there was concern for the North taking offensive action, then it was appropriate for us to be wary of the South's motives and actions as well. As with many oriental cultures, the Koreans were very much concerned about “saving face” and also believed in the “eye for an eye” policy. This always therefore required a prompt response to any actual or perceived injury received from another party. Not to retaliate was seen as an invitation for further action by the adversary because he would view a lack of response as a sign of weakness. It was not that the South Koreans were looking to make

war, but their view required a response of at least equal magnitude to any provocation from another party. That attitude and philosophy is bound to cause some concern for a foreign observer, such as the United States even if it was closely allied with South Korea. We were always afraid that in this charge-counter charge atmosphere, developments might spin out of control and we would find ourselves in a battle that we had not sought. Habib used to comment that no one could ever know what went on in the DMZ; it was always a powder keg that could explode at any time. He would sometimes add that it might be just as well that we didn't know all that was going on there; it might prevent any of us from sleeping at all. So the possibility of escalation was never far from our thoughts.

On the other hand, I observed over time that Koreans were almost mercurial in the way they reacted to a situation; they would be quick to return fire with fire. But it was also noticeable that these incidents calmed down as quickly as they arose, particularly the ones that occurred at sea or in the air. Those were incidents we could monitor with our electronic equipment, unlike events on the DMZ which required visual observation. It became clear to me that whenever a confrontation started, it was immediately taken over by a central command, on both sides. Once that control was established—and sometimes we were talking about just minutes—airplanes that were despatched for action, would begin to circle and cease aggressive action. So I felt that at least at the command and control level, good common sense was being exercised with a remarkable—and correct—dose of restraint and reality being exercised—on both sides. These observations further fortified my view that all Koreans, regardless of the regime they lived under, were very similar in their reactions and outlook. It was probably true that the volatility that we were worried about and our anxiety about the actions of Koreans on both sides of the DMZ were probably under better control than we thought. Still, in all, they were all Koreans!

Before ending the discussion of this part of my career, I would describe one incident because I consider it illustrative of a lot of the issues that we confronted on a daily basis. One late winter evening in February, 1977 (I believe), I heard that a confrontation had taken place at sea. As was my practice, I immediately went to the command post at

Yongsan. When I got there I found Admiral Hank Morgan, the head of our DMZ negotiating team and the senior US Naval officer in Korea, sitting in his office looking pensively at the ceiling. He told me a little about the incident, including the fact that there had been a number of deaths. He told me that North Korean fast patrol boats had crossed the so-called “Northern Limit Line” (NLL) at very high speed. That line was an arbitrary extension of the DMZ that had been drawn by someone, both into the China Sea and the Sea of Japan. It was not part of the Armistice Agreement and legally, the North could wander across it into the open seas outside of the 12 mile territorial limit as much s they wished. But someone, long before, had drawn this line on a map and by custom it had become a line which we and the South Koreans did not expect the North to cross. And in fact, both sides had respected this line before 1976-77 even though it had no legal status. So when the North Korean patrol boats crossed that line, it became a challenge. Morgan, on his own authority, had ordered a South Korean destroyer out to sea to intercept these patrol boats. He ordered that the North Korean boats be boarded. When he told me that, I instinctively reacted with a question: “But, Hank, aren't these boats on the high seas?”. He agreed that was the fact and then I injudiciously asked whether boarding those boats was not an act of piracy. Morgan flew out of the chair and yelled at me: “Goddamn it, Cleveland, you sound just like a fucking Congressman!”.

I will never forget those words. Morgan came from the JP Morgan family and had married the daughter of Admiral McCain, Sr., then the CINCPAC and the sister of the current Senator from Arizona. As you can well imagine, the tension was very high. I suggested that in fact, the Admiral just might have to talk to those Congressmen or at least that someone might have to answer to Congress for Morgan's decision. During this discussion with Morgan, I found out that the destroyer had cut a North Korean fishing boat in two and thirty DPRK fisherman had drowned. It was a tragic consequence of a very rash decision which I think was faulty. Later we surmised that the patrol boats had in fact been despatched to round up and bring the fishing boats back above the NLL. It was a purely

defensive action by the North in an effort to save their fishermen; it turned out to have tragic consequences stemming from an completely illegal order of piracy.

At the end of my conversation with Morgan, I asked him: “Hank, why did you give that order?”. He answered that because if he hadn't, Park Chung Hee would have. My obvious observation was to ask why he didn't let Park take the onus for an illegal act. Morgan's final comment was: “I made an immediate decision to take action to insure that the Command would maintain operational control over the UN forces”. This exchange illustrates clearly the conflicting pressures that all US representatives in Korea faced. There were rare instances when an issue was clear cut; there were always a multitude of factors that had to be weighed. The importance that the Admiral placed on maintaining operational control is instructive because in this particular case, it became the predominant objective regardless of possible consequences, certainly including loss of life. I fully accepted the importance of maintaining operational control, but I was also very aware of the potential risks and dangers that it imposed on us. It was a responsibility that has on several occasions placed the US in very difficult circumstances and I think all commanders had to be aware of the pluses and minuses of having operational control over foreign forces. We thought we had to have Opcon in Korea as long as we were pledged to defend that country, but it was and is a responsibility which has to be handled with utmost care, sensitive to all the nuances, particularly political ones, that come with the authority. I think Morgan's stated thought processes were very interesting; he decided to maintain US operational control at all costs; he was more concerned about the loss of US control than he was of the immediate illegal action that he took. I don't think it was a very good reason to kill thirty innocent people, regardless of their nationality. I don't doubt that Morgan may well have thought that by maintaining operational control in the US command might have prevented an even greater tragedy. But he committed an act of piracy—ordering a South Korean Navy to board North Korean ships in international waters. The second mistake, which was accidental, I am sure, was committed when the destroyer—in heavy winter fog—sliced through the fishing ship. Morgan left Korea soon thereafter and retired from the

Navy; I suspect that his action that night may well have had something to do with his early retirement.

This incident was also a prime example of the importance of civilian control over military actions—certainly during peace time. The action at sea had taken place before any civilian input could be brought to bear and that was most unfortunate; the outcome of Morgan's split second decision might have been far worse than it was. The North Koreans had every legal right to take retaliatory action; what the South Korean destroyer did was sheer piracy and no government in the world would or could have supported Morgan's decision. I accept that there are times when it just isn't possible to bring civilians into the decision-making process; there are undoubtedly times that the military has to react instantaneously for the protection of its own people. But that isn't all that frequently and certainly in the case I have cited, there was plenty of time to seek a civilian viewpoint. Military operational control, as I said earlier, cuts both ways: it is a necessity in the Korean situation, but it is also a weapon that has to be used very, very carefully, fraught with danger and risks.

I should also note that this interception at sea of North Korean patrol boats was another chapter in a long series of events involving the northern limit line and two outposts on the coast of North Korea—Y-Pdo and P-Ydo. These were islands that we had fortified—the one furthest north was heavily fortified. Undoubtedly, the existence of these fortified islands right off their coast were of concern to the North Koreans. Sometime in the mid-1970s, the North began to send its patrol boats south of the limit line, just to test our response which was forthcoming—one way or another. There was some shooting sometimes when these incursions took place, even though, as I said earlier, there was nothing illegal about the North sending these boats as long as they stayed in international waters. Within the 12 mile territorial waters, the South could legitimately claim jurisdiction which it did for the waters around the two fortified islands, which were South Korean territory as specified in the Armistice Agreements. Shooting at North Korean boats sailing in and around the waters of the two islands was a legitimate use of self-defense—at least in our eyes. The North viewed it somewhat differently because it felt—and probably

accurately—that these islands were being used for intelligence collection. The situation was further complicated because the northern island's territorial waters overlapped with the North Korea's territorial waters. So the North tested on many occasions our resolve to defend these islands and the waters around them. As I said, the mid to late 1970s was a time when the North tested our resolve on these islands on several occasions. Both Stilwell and Vessey improved the fortifications on the islands. We put Marines and big guns on the islands.

Q: You left Korea in 1977. What was your next assignment?

CLEVELAND: I had hoped that after my tour in Seoul as Political Counselor, I would be assigned as an Office Director in the Department. I was ready to return to Washington, not having spent very much time at headquarters during my career to that date. Unfortunately, no directorship in EA was available, particularly since Dick Holbrooke had just been appointed as Assistant Secretary and was making major changes in the staffing of the Bureau. He did send me a telegram, asking whether I would be interested in working with him as his assistant for congressional relations. Unfortunately, I did not understand at the time how important Congress was to the Department in general and to Dick Holbrooke in particular. So, I said: no. I later found out that he spent an enormous amount of time and effort on his congressional relations; had I understood that, I think I might have been happy to accept his offer because it was obviously a key job in Dick's mind. I believe that Dick was somewhat unique in his approach to congressional relations. All assistant secretaries had one person in his or her bureau that focused on congressional relations, but those people normally worked through the Office of Congressional Relations (H). Dick on the other hand wanted someone who would represent him directly on the Hill; someone who was right in his office who could take care of any congressional issues that arose on the Far East area.

Not knowing Dick's approach to congressional relations, I felt that the job that was offered was not really a progression in my career; I had hoped for something that I

thought sounded better. In any case, I went back and forth with the Bureau and returned to Washington in fact unassigned and then, thanks in part to the intervention of Bill Gleysteen, who was Dick's senior deputy, I was finally assigned to the Inspector General's Office. This was a new operation under Clay McManaway established to inspect our assistance programs around the world. In fact, this program never got off the ground because Senator Hollings stopped it; he did not want a separate inspector general for assistance program. I must admit that I did not handle my assignment after Seoul with much adroitness. I managed to upset Holbrooke because he thought that I didn't want to work for him; I then took a job that never got started.

After several months, when it became clear that the McManaway operation was not going to be viable, I drifted back to EA without an assignment. They kindly gave me an office and asked me to write a paper on Korea, which was essentially make-work. Eventually, Holbrooke called me and told me that I was going to be the Deputy Director of the Office of Regional Affairs in EA. I took it, although I was still disappointed. I became involved in the issues that a regional affairs office handles; in EA, one of those was refugees, Vietnamese and Cambodians. Herb Horowitz was the Director, but he stayed only a few months and then I was promoted to his job as Director of Regional Affairs.

The Bureau in 1978 was headed by Dick Holbrooke. He had four deputy assistant secretaries—three of whom were political. Then there were ten office directors—eight country oriented and two regional ones.

The Regional Affairs Office handled all the “cats and dogs”. EA/RA was entirely different from its counterpart in EUR because in that Bureau, the Regional Affairs Office backstopped our representation in NATO and EC and other regional European institutions. EA was much more bilaterally oriented; it did not really need a large regional affairs office. We handled subjects that cut across country borders—e.g. UN, refugees, labor, human rights, etc. EA had a separate Regional Economic Office, so that we did not get involved in issues falling under that rubric. I think Dick hoped that I would take on the speech writing

responsibilities, but I really wasn't up to that—I didn't know him well enough nor did I have enough specific knowledge of all the issues in the Bureau. Mike Eiland, who worked for me, did write a speech for Dick on Vietnam that was very well received. But that is as far as our speech writing efforts went. I served in RA for about 12 months. I mentioned human rights. Starting in 1978, this became a serious issues for the Department with the advent of Pat Derian to the office of Assistant Secretary for Human Rights. We viewed the issue a little more dispassionately than the people in the Human Rights Bureau (HR) wished us to do. We did not see eye-to-eye at all with them. They wanted to condemn all governments and people who in their eyes were violators of their concepts of human rights. To that Bureau, East Asia was a ripe target. I don't think it made sense to publically argue that many of the governments in our region were dictatorial and deprived their citizens of freedoms that we believe in and that these regimes could be brutal at times. Of course, to allege violations of human rights was one thing; to prove them was an entirely different matter. I don't think we really had a firm enough grip on the extent of the human rights violations; there were indications, but no solid proof. We had many allegations from those who wanted to perhaps acquire power and therefore found it in their own interest to make the charges of abuse. But these opposition groups seldomly were able to provide us with concrete proof-such as might stand up in a court of law. So public condemnation was risky.

In addition, we had some reservations about making our policy one dimensional. We had a lot at stake in places like Korea; this was a situation fraught with political and military peril with the North standing aggressively on the other side of a fragile demarcation line. We thought it unwise to continually berate the South Koreans for their human rights behavior when we had so many other objectives that we wanted to achieve. But there was no question that Korea and many countries in East Asia were ripe for cries of anguish from the Human Rights Bureau. We had many very tense meetings with the HR Bureau people. It was in this period that the administration decided to issue an annual report on human rights conditions for every country in the world. There were many officials in the

Department who challenged the wisdom of issuing such reports because in addition to adding to bilateral tensions, it was not at all clear that such reports would be efficacious. Eventually, these reports became a Congressional mandate so that now they have become part of the process. The reports became central to our relations with many countries.

So, as I said, we were in constant arguments with HR. I became deeply involved in these, particularly when Korea was the issue because I knew the country. By and large, the office directors dealt with the issues pertaining to their own countries with HR. In most cases, compromises were quickly worked out; eventually we would work out language in all cases, but not until there were a number of very tense meetings with HR staff. The Embassy would send in the first draft of its country report; then the desk would tinker with it as well as HR. HR would invariably harden the language and then the negotiations would start. Sometimes, the issues would have to be forwarded to a Deputy Assistant Secretary or even the Assistant Secretaries. Holbrooke, in most cases, was very sensible about these reports. Sometimes he would make concessions that we might not have made, but he certainly resisted any sharp attacks on East Asian countries or leaders, especially since these were unclassified documents that would end up in the press. He understood that sharp public condemnation of another country or personality was not usually the way to conduct relations or to achieve our goals. I certainly at the time agreed that public censure was ill-advised. I must confess however, that as time has passed, my views have changed to some degree. I now think it more feasible for the US to publicly describe a human right situation as it sees it for all countries around the world without running the risk of a major or severe reverberation. At least, my mind is not set against these reports as it was when they began to be issued.

Let me mention the refugee problem briefly. The East Asia refugee problem stemmed from Vietnam and the aftermath of that war. We were primarily concerned by the boat refugees from Vietnam, who were becoming a major problem in the area. We wanted to know who the refugees were and how we might assist in taking care of them. The refugees

were landing in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Hong Kong. The issue was how to insure their safety. The Asian countries were afraid that the Vietnamese would settle permanently in their countries which could have been a major drain on their scarce resources. Essentially, we struck a deal with these countries—that is we and other developed nations and these developing nations. We agreed that the developed countries—Australia, Europe and the US—would become the permanent havens for these refugees. That greatly eased the fears of the Southeast Asian countries; enough at least so that they would permit the establishment of “temporary” refugee camps in their countries, where the refugees could wait until permanent settlement. Some of the “temporary” camps have become long lasting, but the assurance of the West that they will accept the refugees still stands.

I think over time the deal that was made was a good one for both the refugees and the Southeast countries. In general, the refugee problem has been handled relatively well, with perhaps the exception of the those that landed in Hong Kong during a later period. I was certainly opposed to forced repatriation; I don't think anyone in the government supported that approach at the time. By 1981-82, perhaps our views of why people left Vietnam changed, but in 1978-79, we assumed that these people were all political refugees and we certainly would not have repatriated them. Eventually, I believe that the US took about 1 million boat refugees. It was a generous contribution to world stability.

Louise McNutt, who worked for me, had served in the Bureau for many, many years. She was our expert on UN affairs and every year would be kept busy with the General Assembly session which always began with ministerial level talks. Regional Affairs would from time to time also become involved in labor issues, arising either from the treatment of working laborers in their own country or from labor union issues in East Asia.

ASEAN issues were not handled by RA, but by an Office that Holbrooke had established which dealt with Philippine, Indonesia, Malaysian, Thai, Burmese and Singapore issues. Those were the core ASEAN countries and therefore even those the issues were not

bilateral, they were primarily handled by that new Office, headed by Bob Fritz. It was Holbrooke's idea to put relations with all ASEAN countries under one Office to insure some uniformity of US policy toward all of these disparate countries.

Q: In early 1980, you transferred to another job. How did come about?

CLEVELAND: Early one Sunday morning of the winter of 1979-80, I received a call from Holbrooke at home. He wanted to see me immediately in his office. I wondered what I had done to deserve such an honor. As it turned out, he had reached the conclusion that Fritz, as good an officer as he was, was just overburdened and could not give Ambassador Morton Abramowitz, then in Thailand, enough time to suit Mort. So Dick asked me to take over responsibility for Thai affairs; he gave me an office directorship and two assistants plus a secretary. He wanted me to concentrate on taking care of Mort's concerns in Washington.

It turned out that Mort's prime interest at the time was the porous border between Thailand and Cambodia through which masses of refugees flowed out and rice and equipment flowed in. This major flow of people and assets was caused by Vietnamese attacks on Cambodia. In fact, a major crisis had been created at the border. What I didn't realize at the beginning was that Mort was in the process of taking over responsibility for border issues. In effect he took over the leadership of all the NGOs, the UN and other governmental agencies just by the force of his personality and his exceptional ability. Mort is one of the most forceful, creative and finest officers I have worked with. It was not long after he started his efforts that he was de facto in charge of all border operations. It was educational for me to work in supporting him. He did a remarkable job of making all agencies work together and deliver whatever services each was responsible for. The UNHCR in Bangkok was wringing its hands half of the time because Mort was moving ahead without worrying about bureaucracy.

Mort's activities kept me on the phone for most of the day. First of all, Mort was always inquiring whether his instructions or requests were being complied with and if not, why not. Or why things were taking longer than he thought necessary. I think we spent roughly $18,000 in long distance calls between Washington and Bangkok in 18 months, which is a sizeable bill any time and real money in the early 1980s. It was a great experience for me. I felt useful—for the first time since leaving Seoul. I also learned a lot about moving bureaucracies. The Regional Affairs directorship was fine, but being the Thai Office Director was continual action. Having good superiors also helped; my first one was Mike Armacost and then John Negroponte. Both were very good to me and rose subsequently to some of the most important jobs in the Foreign Service. John, when he took over, called all his office directors to a meeting to tell us that he had a terrible temper. He predicted that he would on occasions be in our face and there would be terrible scenes. He suggested that we not take it personally and that we not let the experience linger because it was not directed at us as individuals; it was just his temperament. In fact, everything went very smoothly for the eight months I worked for John, he never blew up at me.

I guess I probably had more slack than most office directors because everyone in Washington knew that I was Mort's representative in town and that whatever I did or asked was on Mort's behalf. That was very helpful because Mort commanded considerable respect in most places. The Pentagon was the most recalcitrant player; Mort had worked there and was well known. He had had some run-ins with the Pentagon bureaucracy, which, like all bureaucracies, have long memories.

I remember one issue in particular. Mort wanted some A-1 tanks to shore up the Thai militarily, which was part of his whole strategy to secure the border. He wanted these tanks to be provided the Thais under the military assistance program. So I started a dialogue with DSAA (Defense Security Assistance Agency), ISA (International Security Affairs) and the Army. The Army claimed that it had no surplus A-1 tanks; they needed all they had. It refused even to consider giving up even one, much less the four or five that Mort wanted.

So we had a bureaucratic fight. I kept going back to the Pentagon, pleading our case day in and day out, trying to find some way to satisfy the requirement. One day, we received a telegram from Mort that said on the following day he was going to see Thai Prime Minister Prem. The meeting would start with the usual exchange of pleasantries over a cup of tea. The Prime Minister was bound to ask about the tanks. Mort wanted to know how he should respond to the Prime Minister; should he tell him that the tanks were on their way, or was he to give the PM the standard “crap” that he had been feeding him for months. That line got to the Army; it did not take kindly to the Ambassador's phrasing and I think it stiffened its back for another period of weeks. Eventually, we wore the Army down however, and I finally suggested to Armacost that he call the head of DSAA. That finalized the deal and the tanks were declared surplus and provided to the Thais. Months later, the tanks arrived in Bangkok on a ship; a big ceremony was held with the American Ambassador turning these tanks over to the Thai command. Later that week, I got a message from Mort reporting that the tanks had been unloaded again. When I called him, he told me that the tanks had been unloaded about five times so that the photographers could take pictures every time they were unloaded. Mort managed to have the four tanks all of a sudden turn into twenty by loading and unloading the same four over and over again. The Thai government and military were delighted.

During my tour as Thai Office Director, I went to Thailand two or three times. But frankly, my job had very little to do with our foreign policy towards Thailand per se. My job was to support Mort as he tried to get a hold of the border problems. I was something akin to Abramowitz' ambassador to Washington. Sometime during these 18 months, I found that there were three awards being granted by private institutions for “outstanding contributions to US foreign policy.” I think they were for $10,000 each. I nominated Mort for each of them; he actually won two of them. That was very gratifying because he really deserved recognition for his work in Thailand. I sent Mort a copy of my nomination. When I talked to him over the phone later, he said that anyone could have won those awards with the kind

of write up that I had submitted—he said that he thought that I might have overstated the case to some degree. But I thought it was all true, and I still do.

Q: Then, after your Thai stint, you moved to another job after the Reagan administration took over in 1981. What was that?

CLEVELAND: When the Reagan administration came into office, it appointed Dixie Walker as its Ambassador to Korea. Dixie wanted to have someone in Washington whom he knew; so I was assigned as Director of the Office of Korean Affairs from mid-1981 to early 1982. In fact, Dixie had asked whether I would come back to Seoul to be his DCM. I had known him for a long time going back to my days at Yale where he had been an assistant professor. In 1972, when I was the EA Assistant Secretary's special assistant, I had recruited Dixie to be part of a China experts panel which Marshall Green used on a couple of occasions. So Dixie and I had a long relationship and when he was appointed, he asked me whether I would be interested in joining him. I was delighted, but before all the arrangements could be made, I had to stay in Washington and I served as Director of the Korean desk during that period waiting for my orders to go to Seoul. That worked out very well because it gave me an opportunity to be brought up to date on Korean affairs. It was an unusual situation which worked out well.In fact, I had managed to remain current on the major developments in US-ROK relations after my return in 1977. For example, although I was not involved, I kept track of Koreagate (the Tongsun Park rice scandal) in part because I knew all of the players in that cause c#l#bre. While on the Thai desk, of course, I was busy on too many things to worry very much about Korea so as I say the six months on the desk were very helpful to fill in what I had missed in the intervening period.

In the period while I served in Washington there were many events—as always—in Korea. Park Chung Hee had been assassinated; a major uprising in Kwangju had been brutally suppressed and Chun Doo Hwan had become President. So the situation in Seoul had changed, but not radically. The government was still authoritarian, although I don't think it was as effective as it had been under Park. Chun may have been a little less ruthless,

but the concerns we had about the South's security, its human rights' policies and its economic policies really had not changed. The changes between 1977 and 1982 were nothing compared to the changes that have taken place in the last 7-8 years.

I learned about Park's assassination early one morning (evening in Seoul). By sheer coincidence, I had lunch that day with a former Korean general, Kim Woo Joo, at the Jockey Club. He was visiting the Korean Embassy in Washington. I told him what had happened—at least I was able to tell him that there had been an assassination because at the time nobody was quite sure what would happen next. The general took it all in; I think it came as a great surprise to him. I could see him thinking about all the possibilities; he finally said: “Chun Doo Hwan, Chun Doo Hwan.” I asked him what he meant; he told me that was who would eventually take over the government, which is exactly what happened. I think it was no surprise that someone from the 11th Class of the Korea Military Academy was Park's successor. We all had followed the careers of seven of the graduates of that class for years. The only question was which of “the seven stars” would be the leader; a few months after Park's assassination, we found out.

Q: In 1981, you went to Seoul as DCM. You have already told us how that assignment came about. Tell us a little about the Embassy at that time?

CLEVELAND: Dixie Walker was the Ambassador. I have already mentioned my long standing acquaintance with him. David Blakemore was the Political Counselor and Walt Lundy was the Economic Counselor at the beginning of my tour—he was followed by Don McConville. I knew these people—some better than others. For example, Blakemore had been in Seoul during my previous tour. He was a top notch officer—very bright—and he wrote very well. Our Administrative Counselors were old pros—first George Knight who was followed by Gerald Mandersheid. Both were wonderful officers—solid and competent. The Consul General was Ken Keller. He was one of the most interesting persons in Seoul at the time. He turned down two opportunities for promotion that I know of because he knew he was going to retire after his tour in Seoul and didn't therefore want to take up

one of the MC slots. He was one of the most brilliant people I have ever known. He had a photographic memory; he could visualize pages and pages of Korean names. That was important at the time because during my tour, we undertook the largest single visa anti-fraud operation ever attempted by the Foreign Service. Fortunately, it was very successful and I want to discuss that in greater depth later on. The Station Chiefs were Bob Kennedy and Jim Delaney. The PAO was Bernie Levin, who was also a very good officer.

I think in general the Embassy staff in this period was outstanding. Korea has always attracted some of the best of the Foreign Service because it was one of the hot spots in the world where the US had major interests. We had some language officers—e.g. Spence Richardson (now in Seoul refreshing his language skills in preparation for an assignment to Pyongyang), Don Nichols who was a CIA officer. We of course had Korean employees who had been with the Embassy for many years. They may have worked for the KCIA, but I expected that all of our Korean employees did some work for that organization, and we were therefore careful about what was said to them and what access they had.

I don't remember Dixie ever sitting down with me to give me his ideas of what he wanted from his DCM. I guess I just did whatever I thought would be useful. Dixie was a political appointee—very intelligent and conservative. On that latter trait, that fitted in very well because Korea lent itself to a conservative approach, although at times he was more conservative than the rest of us. I had two advantages: I was a seasoned officer and I had served in Korea before. I focused on the day to day management of the Embassy, filling in whenever I saw gaps. Dixie provided overall management and did a lot of the representational work—public appearances. That left me with a large task which I managed as I saw fit most of the time. I thought Dixie was a great manager—he listened and took advice and gave the staff considerable leeway. I couldn't have asked for a better set-up.

I also spent time covering the waterfront. I had my own contacts in the Korean community and did some of my own reporting. Most often, I passed the drafts to Dixie; he made very

few, if any changes. So I kept my hand in the substantive reporting area. The government officials whom I saw on a regular basis were Yi Song Okay—the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs—, Gong Rho Myong—the Assistant Minister for Political Affairs then and now the Foreign Minister—, and Park Gun-Woo—the Director for North American Affairs, currently (1996) the Korean Ambassador to the US. I saw Park most frequently; he was an old friend. The North American Directorate in the Foreign Ministry was by far the largest component of that institution and Park was beginning to expand its function to include Politico-Military affairs. The Foreign Ministry did not have a Pol-Mil Bureau, but Park saw the need and he started to take on the liaison responsibility with the Defense Ministry. I think in part we (the US), were responsible for forcing the Foreign and Defense Ministries to work much more closely because we raised issues that cut across neat jurisdictional lines. Park Gun Woo saw the future; he understood that the Foreign Ministry would have to acquire greater responsibility and therefore greater knowledge as Korea became an increasing force in international relations.

Outside the Foreign Ministry, I used to have regular contacts with the Trade Ministry—Park Pil Soo, an assistant minister and some of his staff. I had regular contacts with Blue House staff members—Choi Kwang Soo, Kim Kyong Hwan, Lee Bum Suk (he was later killed in the Burma assassination when he was the Foreign Minister). I also saw officials in the Defense Ministry and played golf continually with some Korean generals. Unfortunately, my language competence was minimal; I studied it incessantly, but I could remember my German—learned twenty-five years earlier—far better that Korean; I did learn enough Korean to get along in the Kisaeng house and in the marketplaces and on the golf courses with the caddies. I could probably even maintain some kind of dialogue with an old Korean general who didn't speak much English; between his broken English and my broken Korea, we could maintain some kind of dialogue. But I found Korean a very, very difficult language.

Dixie maintained contact with the CINC. Unlike my previous experience, he had a good relationship with the CINC and the American military in general. We did not face the

tensions that had existed in the mid to late 1970s. There were of course differences in views between the diplomatic and military arms of the US government, but that was to be expected. I think Dixie's relationship with both Bob Sennewald and Bill Livsey—the two CINCs while I was in Seoul—was pretty good.

That gave me more time to pursue my own interests; Dixie had no problem with that because he knew that I had good contacts from my previous tour. Also, the fact that I played golf was an asset. It enabled me to talk to high level people, like Cabinet ministers, in an informal setting; it would not have been appropriate for me to call on them in their offices, but out on the links, good conversations could be held. The availability of a golf course—in Yongsan—and my interest in playing the game gave me access to many people whom I might not have been able to see, except perhaps the highest level—the President. Dixie and I shared the contacts; he knew many members of the cabinet and the business and academic community and he focused on those, while I cultivated the bureaucracy.

In addition to this contact/reporting function, I also was the overseer of the day-to-day Embassy operations making sure that we were responsive to the Ambassador's and Washington's wishes. As I suggested earlier, the consular operation became an increasing work load for me, although the details of our efforts were left to Keller.

In general, I think the Embassy sections worked well together. There was a little friction periodically between a couple of the sections, but that didn't interfere with our tasks or our productivity. I can remember one funny situation involving Walt Lundy and the Agricultural Attach#. Walt was skinny and the son of a peanut farmer. Jim Frechman, the Ag Attach#, was fat and the son of a dairy farmer. He always used to complain about the lack of rain. Lundy on the other hand used to say that his father had always complained about too much rain. So there were differences—particularly about the size of the next rice crop. The continual bickering ceased after I called both of them into the office and told them to cut it

out. But that was a very minor situation; on the whole, I think the Embassy worked well as a unity despite the many disparate Washington agencies represented in Seoul.

Carter and I lived in an old Japanese house which was on Compound 1, right in the middle of town. I used to walk to work; sometimes I walked home for lunch. The security strictures in this period were not particularly onerous; I did not use a personal guard and never felt threatened, even towards the end of the tour when the security issue got a little more attention. We may still have had the monthly practice air raids for a while after I arrived, but I believe they were suspended before I left. The curfew, which was in effect during my last tour, had been abolished- -unfortunately, because it meant later hours in the evening. The curfew was very beneficial to diplomats because you could be certain that almost all social occasions would end by 10:30 or 11:00. In fact, life in Seoul during the 1981-85 period was very relaxed. Of course, we were always busy; there is something about Koreans that makes life always interesting from a professional point of view. If there wasn't a crisis in the morning, you could be sure that there would be one by the time the day ended. The social life was always busy; there were very few nights that Carter and I spent at home alone. Some of the occasions were stag—Kisaeng parties—but most were with Carter. So we were busy, but it was most enjoyable.

The city had changed considerably in the intervening five years. The Lotte Hotel had been built right opposite City Hall. I was stunned on return by the change; new buildings had sprung up all over the city. The buildings were marble faced—not just concrete as had been true in the 1970s. It was the third generation of buildings in Seoul, following funny buildings ten story high and then some high-rise buildings which had little grace. The new buildings were impressive; the Koreans were beginning to use new materials and new architecture. By the mid-1980s, traffic was still manageable because the Korean car manufacturers had not yet developed production lines for domestic cars. Motorcycles and small Hyundais were quite popular, but the major surge of traffic didn't really begin until the late 1980s and the early 1990s. So in the early 1980s, one could still drive through town at a reasonable pace. The pollution was as always atrocious, caused primarily by the “Ondol”

heating and the diesel buses. The buses downtown looked like railroad trains—one after another in an endless stream. When I walked to work in the morning—particularly in winter time—I could cut through the pollution with a knife and could feel the impact of that stuff on my lungs.

During the 1981-85 period, Korea was still under a dictatorship, following a military coup led by Chun Doo Hwan. I don't believe that Chun's background was a disadvantage to us; that is, unlike Park Chung Hee, he did not show preference for discussing issues with the CINC rather than the Ambassador. In any event, Bob Sennewald was a top flight human being, and I didn't notice any competition between the CINC and the Ambassador for Chun's attention. I also didn't notice the Koreans trying to play the two elements of the US government one against the other. Of course, in a situation such as existed in Korea, the US military has an advantage because it maintains close contacts with its Korean counterparts, many of whom were close to the President. I think in general, the US Embassy in Seoul probably has never known enough about the Korean military, but I don't think, at least in the period we are discussing, that had any direct effect on our policy and actions. It was not an issue that I spent much time on.

We still had a JUSMAAG, run by a succession of major generals. There was always, as had been historically true, some friction about who was in charge of the JUSMAAG. On paper, that unit was part of the Embassy, but the general's efficiency report was written by the CINC. That made for a difficult situation for the JUSMAAG chief; some were more skillful than others in bridging this organizational divide. One of the chiefs—Hugh Quinn, who was there for much of my tour—became a close friend of Dixie's. That helped smooth any ruffled feathers that might have arisen.

While I was in Korea the second time, we established a consulate in Pusan. For many years, we had had a USIA branch library and offices there, just as we had in Kwangju and Taegu. The Pusan USIA operation was the largest—Pusan being Korea's second largest city. We decided to add a consular officer there because it was such a key center.

He became the senior US government representative in Pusan, causing considerable dismay among the USIA staff, including and perhaps particularly among the USIA local employees, who until then had been the masters of the ship. I don't think that USIA felt comfortable working under the supervision of a State Department official; we were well aware of the possibility of that reaction when we reached the decision, but we felt that Pusan needed a Foreign Service official in light of the increasing demand for services, such as consular, commercial and political reporting. Pusan was a city of 3 million people with a view that was different perhaps than Seoul's with which we needed to be more familiar. Major Korean firms—Daewoo, Hyundai, etc—were all headquartered in the Pusan region; that became an increasing matter of interest to us. Had we only had a consular workload, I don't think we would have established a post in Pusan; in fact, the consular section in Seoul had concerns about establishing a consular operation which would have been outside their day-to-day supervision. It was concerned that if Pusan refused to issue to a visa, the applicant would try in Seoul and vice-versa, increasing the need for more policing of applications lest we have even more fraud than we were encountering. In fact, I am not sure we ever did issue visas in Pusan. Also there was a growing American population in Pusan—both military and civilians. They needed to be supported by an American official and that was one more reason for our action. Our one officer therefore offered a US presence, provided US citizen protection services, did some political reporting and assisted in commercial work.

I maintained contacts with the press, probably because of my own preferences rather than of necessity. The 1981-85 period was relatively quiet and we did not have many situations that raised the interest of the press. The government controlled the Korean press, of course, and was inclined in this period to maintain good relationships with the US. It therefore protected us from the local press to some extent; I don't recall that we ever had a confrontational moment with the Korean press. I thought that it was unfortunate that the Korean press was not permitted to be freer; it gave us a free ride, and I am not sure that was a good thing necessarily. I dealt a lot with the American press; I was quite open

with them—most of the time—on a “background” basis. The American press was not major work-load because there was only one resident American newspaper man—from “The Wall Street Journal” in Seoul during this period. The other newspaper were covered by reporters stationed in Tokyo who would visit Seoul from time to time. Sam Jameson, of “The Los Angeles Times” was very well informed about Korean matters having covered Korea for many, many years.

Human rights in Korea was always a big story with the press. Here is an illustration. When Pat Derian returned to Korea with Kim Dae Jung in 1984 or 1985, she was escorted by a mass of newspaper people. We had our hands full. It was quite a story, when this troublesome lady got off the plane with Kim Dae Jung.

Pat Derian was well known because of her service as Assistant Secretary for Human Rights during the Carter Administration. She was a strong liberal, if not a radical. She was well remembered for the fervor with which she pursued human rights violations—actual and alleged. I can remember meetings chaired by Warren Christopher, then the Deputy Secretary and now the Secretary of State, held in the late 1970s when he would have to ask Derian to restrain herself, particularly when she advocated actions that may have seemed justified from her human rights' point of view, but would have caused severe damage to US interests in some foreign country. In any case, Derian and Bob White, a former US Ambassador in Central America—well known for his extreme liberal views—accompanied Kim Dae Jung when he returned from the US after a long period of exile. They felt, I suppose, that their presence would save Kim from immediate arrest or some other provocative action. In fact, the KCIA—stupidly—immediately rushed to the plane and after a brief scuffle, took Kim off in a car, leaving Derian and White standing alone at the bottom of the stairs. There are tapes which record Derian screaming, presumably at some KCIA agents: “Get your filthy hands off me, you—.” Derian and White came to the Embassy and raised hell with Dixie. Then they went to the press. As a counter, I was holding “deep background”—no attribution whatsoever, even to an “Embassy official”—briefings for the press. Clyde Haberman, a very good “New York Times” correspondent

somehow managed to get a quote from Dixie which described Derian in something less than flattering terms. That quote ended up in the “New York Times” giving its editorial writer food for a very nasty piece about US ambassadors criticizing Pat Derian. Dixie was the subject of several negative comments in the US press. That was too bad because I felt that both Derian and White came to Seoul to foment trouble and Dixie, with his comment, fell into their trap and gave them an opportunity to create mischief.

The bottom line: this episode was a twenty-four hour story in Korea; it had no impact on Korea's human rights policy, which was not good. The human right situation in Korea in the early 1980s was not a nice picture, as it had not been for a long time. But Pat Derian did nothing to improve it.

I might just say a word about our policies towards Korea in the 1982-85 period, primarily as a contrast to the policies that existed during my tour five years earlier. In the first place, as it had always been, our principal objective on the Korean Peninsula was the maintenance of peace and stability. That had been true for decades and still is true today. The US could not afford to run the risk of an invasion from the North; too much investment in the well being of the South Koreans could have gone up in smoke in a very brief moment.

Our second objective, within the security context, was to pressure the ROK government to take as enlightened a political path as possible. There were two major political fault lines in Korea: first, North vs South and second, the Korean military—or government—vs the South Korean people. We worked as best we could to impress on the military and the government the need to modernize the political process and minimize the human rights violations. We did this by continually talking to the government and sometimes even, on background, giving our views to the press. The Korean government of course always connected the two divisions; that is to say, they used to point out to us the dangers from the North as a way to alleviate the pressure we put on it for opening the domestic political process. The Koreans always maintained that their political restrictions were

imposed because of the threat from the North. My personal view was that democracy in South Korea was on its way and that sooner or later, democracy would come to that country. The people were highly educated—thousands and thousands had had their education outside of Korea, most in the US. Those people brought back with them democratic concepts that they had seen work well in other countries. It was obvious to me that the 5,000 or so graduates of the Korean Military Academy could not hold out forever against the tens of thousands of their countrymen who had personally witnessed democracy and an open political process. The military had been very useful to the country because they had technical proficiency which was essential to economic development and organizational skills also required for economic development. But by the early 1980s, the civilian population had acquired the same skills—perhaps even more sharply honed than the military's. So the contribution that the military had made to economic development was no longer a necessity for South Korea. So I felt, as I said, that democracy would come to the fore in Korea sooner or later. I must frankly admit that I didn't know whether the advent of democracy in South Korea might be a security risk; the opening of the political process could be a messy process and might invite some kind of adventure from the North. I just didn't know the answer to that question, but it did make the timing of the opening a matter of vital importance.

The real issue was whether the advent of democracy should be forced. I was opposed to pushing the process ahead of what the Koreans themselves were willing to try. It was up to them to dictate the pace of political development. Democracy is not an easy process; the Koreans themselves had to be satisfied that they were mature enough to handle it. Democracy does not come naturally to Koreans as shown by the way their culture and society worked. But inevitably, as the middle class grew—as it was doing rapidly—it was clear to me that enough people would have the desire and intelligence to wish to be in charge of their lives. I was sure that eventually this middle class would eventually demand greater and greater share of the governmental power. I was confident enough in this judgement that I was willing to let this process develop naturally; that is without

overt, outside interference or pressure. I did not believe that it was the US' role to force the pace of the process. I thought that we promoted democracy the best when we stood as an example. This is not to say that we should not have remonstrated about human rights violations; we should have and did, often quite forcefully—I always believed in speaking in strong terms to Koreans because that was the way they communicated with each other. I had no objection to being tough with the government—but privately, not publicly. Again: I thought the question of democracy and the pace of political development had to be decided by Koreans themselves. If South Korea were to become a true democracy, it had to be done by the citizens on their own and for themselves. To do it just to please the Americans, a) would not have worked and b) would not have lasted.

I was not overly concerned that the process of democratization would increase instability on the Peninsula because I think the Korean military, as it had done so often in the past, would step right in and quell any movements that might endanger the security of the nation. In any case, I did not believe that there would be a revolution. I did admit that it was a possibility; I was willing to grant that there might have been a repetition of the 1960 student uprisings. I thought that if such an event were to occur, let it happen; it might have been necessary for the political development. It would have been a case in which the Korean people might be taking serious risks, even endangering their lives. I full expected that some blood might flow in the streets. I felt very strongly that the US, in no way or shape, should have promoted that or even given any kind of sign of approbation. I fully anticipated another 1960 uprising, but I certainly was opposed to us being cited as an instigator or opposer under any kind of pretext. One could see the political pressure building up as the middle class grew. All of my Korean contacts would essentially give me the same message—in carefully phrased words. It was time to open the political process. Toward the end of my tour, there were occasional student uprisings, but I think the prevailing mood in the middle class was that of anger and resentment and disrespect for Chun Doo Hwan particularly, but no desire for open confrontations.

Neither Chun or his wife ever won the respect of the Korean people—at least those with whom I had contacts—the middle class, academics, business people and even some military. All of them referred to Chun Doo Hwan in disparaging terms; they called him “stone head”—he was bald. They thought that Chun's wife had a very sharp chin—i.e. they thought that she and her family were deeply involved in major corruption. This was a strong negative under-current, which grew as the middle class grew and felt stronger and stronger. I think that at least some of the government officials understood what was going on in Korea. On one occasion, Park Gun Woo at a session at the Nadja Hotel coffee shop—where we met when we had important matters to discuss—literally broke down and cried. I was stunned; I had never seen a Korean cry and to have an official do so was unforgettable. Park had just been in the US with Chun Doo Hwan on a visit. He and the Foreign Minister had during the flight back been called into the President's cabin for dialogue. Park said that the only thing Chun could talk about was “his personal survival.” He was deeply embarrassed and outraged that the President of his country would be so obsessed with that issue. It was clear to Gun that his government had become so dictatorial that the leader of it was solely concerned with his own survival. He thought that Korea deserved better than that. And he sobbed.

That much was very different from my experiences in 1974-77. I never had (then) a Foreign Ministry official break down like that. It is true that even during my first tour, I would occasionally pick up rumblings of discontent with Park Chung Hee, but they were not nearly as audible as during my second. That in part may have been also the result of not knowing the Koreans as well during the 1970s as I did in the 1980s, but I don't believe the contempt that my contacts showed for Park Chung Hee was anything compared to that which they exhibited towards Chun Doo Hwan. It may well have been that as Park tightened the political screws, people got madder and madder, but I think Park always commanded more respect than Chun.

As I said, there were rumblings about corruption at the highest level. But I must confess that I was not aware of the depth and extent of the corruption as has been subsequently made public. I assumed, as my Korean friends used to tell me, that corruption was part of Korean life and that contractors were paying some bribes in exchange for being given business. The Korean business process was just rife with that kind of corruption. I was once told by a business leader that every New Year's Day, he would pay calls and leave envelopes stuffed with money on the desks of the bureaucrats he and his corporation did business with. But I don't think I really understood the extent of this practice. I didn't know of instances of corruption. American firms were banned by US law from participating in these practices and I think few if any firms behaved in corrupt ways. They may well have had Korean agents that did the dirty work for them, but I don't know that for a fact. I don't think we ever had evidence that US companies were involved in bribery; I talked to many American businessmen, whom I knew well and trusted, who told me that there probably were Korean agents that paid off officials in order to get contracts for American firms. Of course, these agents made a handsome profit themselves if the awards were granted and could well have shared their profits with some Korean officials, but we never got any specifics or even allegations that we could pursue. However, the Station Chiefs may have specifics.

There was one exception to my general comment, which concerned me deeply. In Korea, there was a Saemaul (New Village) movement—started many years earlier by Park Chung Hee and designed to help the rural communities. Chun Doo Hwan put his brother in charge of that movement. Saemaul was always a grass roots operation; the participants all wore distinct baseball hats with logos on them. I always thought that it was essentially a political movement. Money was given to members somewhat akin to “walking around” money known in some US cities. These funds were intended to buy for the government political support in the communities—by 1982, it had spread far beyond the rural areas; you could find subgroups belonging to the movement in every city and even in the government's ministries. But when Chun's brother took over, it became clear

to me that the he was using this organization to corrupt the country politically—it became an enforcer of government policies and a propaganda tool. Saemaul, in 1982, was a much more powerful and more worrisome organization than it had been in the 1974-77 period, although even then I was concerned about the possibility of the movement being perverted to suit the President's political motives and becoming a troublesome political issue. Under Chun's brother's aegis, it reported directly to the President and became a tool for his repressive regime. So it was more powerful and more insidious.

There was a government party of which Chun Doo Hwan was the leader. But the Saemaul movement became a personal, political and economic arm of the President's through his brother. It became an avenue through which the President could exert influence and pressure on the population. That concerned me deeply. There were three Ho's—three people with the same last name who had been colonels and who Chun had brought into the government in key jobs. One of the Ho's—perhaps the smartest and the toughest—was assigned to Saemaul after Chun's brother took over.

One day, in the summer of 1985, Carter and I were virtually summoned—"It would be in your interest to be there"—out to Saemaul headquarters—a large park near the Seoul airport with lots of exhibits—for its annual celebration. I thought at the time that the request for my appearance had somewhat of a threatening tone to it.

Our "invitation" may have come because I may have been reported to the government as having been critical of the movement. An American company was getting involved with the Chuns on a very sensitive government contract and I was following that deal closely. There was an "open" bidding procedure, but it became clear to us that Chun's brother was being used to help this one American company to win the competition. Westinghouse, Combustion Engineering (CE), and General Electric were bidding for the contract to construct two new nuclear power plants. Combustion Engineering had come to me at the beginning of this process and I had given them the standard briefing about the situation in Korea. Westinghouse had been in Korea for many years and therefore didn't need

the briefing. Soon after that briefing, Combustion Engineering brought a consultant to Seoul from Southern California. That gentleman told me a little about their strategy which included somehow joining forces with Saemaul, which would make the President's brother their agent. I immediately told him about my concerns about this movement because a CE alliance with Saemaul would involve the American company in some of the darker parts of Korean politics.

Later, the Seoul representative of CE came in to see me and I again repeated my concerns about his company's plans to use Chun's brother as their agent, using Saemaul in some way or other. I told him that if CE wanted to use brother Chun and the movement, that was CE's business, but that the company should be aware of my concerns about getting in bed with Saemaul. I told him quite a lot about that movement—the CIA as well as many of my own contacts knew a considerable amount about what was going on—, including specific case citations which were the cause of some of my concerns. I told the CE representative that he and his company were going to run some serious risks by using Chun's brother. I had no doubt that it might have been a good way to get to the President; on the other hand, if the whole story were told—as it probably would be eventually—there was a serious possibility that CE would be barred from doing any further work in Korea. I thought that CE should have all views before it reached a decision. I was rather blunt in my assessment and the CE man left thanking me profusely. I think he was grateful for the information.

In about two or three weeks, the CE consultant from California came to see me again, furious—he was close to threatening me. He pointed out the stakes for CE and the involvement of a lot of high level people in the Korea deal. He told me that Judge Clark, the former Assistant to President Reagan for National Security affairs, was a member of the consulting firm. So this was a high stakes game. I might add that this representative of the consulting firm had also worked in the White House. I suspect that he had a hand in the “invitation” I received from Saemaul. I frankly cannot remember his name.

As I said, the “invitation” to the Saemaul celebration came almost as an order, in threatening tones. I did go with my wife, Carter. She was sort of bemused, but I wanted her there as a witness. We were given a lot of time and attention by Chun's brother, shown around as VIPs, etc. I was given the “premier” tour with all the propaganda about Saemaul's great achievements and deeds. It was a Potemkin Village operation if I had ever seen one. I listened carefully and smiled everywhere. My assumption was that Chun's brother and Ho had heard of my misgivings about the movement and were trying to influence me to take a different point of view.

Following the tour, I was asked to come see Judge Clark. I should mention that at the time I was the Charge'—the Ambassador was away. I went to the Chosun Hotel to meet with the Judge. He talked to me in his most gracious and disarming manner—about nothing that was of great interest to me (essentially about all the projects he was involved in, including the “Three Gorges” project in China which he had just visited). Finally, in a very soft voice, he said that he hoped that the Embassy would support the CE bid. I told him that since three American firms were bidding, we certainly couldn't favor one over the others. He said he understood that, but he hoped that we would give CE advice and support “as appropriate.”

As I was being ushered out—still wondering what this little act was all about—out of the suite's second bedroom appeared another American. I immediately recognized him. It was Lynn Nofzinger—a major player in American politics. We had never met, but I knew him immediately from photographs that I had seen in the press. He came over to me, put his arm around my shoulder as we were walking to the elevator and said: “Paul, we are not going to have any troubles, are we?” It was obvious that he was referring to my concerns about Saemaul, about which he had undoubtedly heard from the Combustion Engineering. I knew that at that time, my name was in the White House as a candidate for the ambassadorship to New Zealand. There was no question in my mind that Clark and Nofzinger knew that too. I was furious with their tactics, but there really wasn't anything

further I could do. I felt that I was personally threatened and that in their subtle way, these guys had put me on notice that my future in the Foreign Service was at stake. I think that Nofzinger in fact even referred to my “golden future” in the Service. I certainly felt that a message was being sent to me; I resented that deeply and was furious. I have told this story to many people, including the press—on background. I am still mad about.

What upset the consultant firm I presume was that I was giving advice to CE—as well as them—which was at odds with what it was saying to CE—in fact they told me that outright and that was confirmed to me by CE. As I said, the CE representative in Seoul had listened very carefully to me and appeared appreciative of my briefings. He had obviously reported what he had heard back to headquarters in the US. It was the same comments that I had made to the representative of the consulting firm. In any event, CE hired Chun's brother as their agent and did indeed win the contract for the nuclear plants. So my advice may have not been good, but it was clear to me that any American firm that asked should be given the benefit of all of our knowledge about Saemaul and my concerns about the risks of dealing with Chun's brother.

There was another major business transaction that was very much alive during my tour. I refer to the F-16 vs. F-18 competition, which actually began when I had been in the Political Section in the 1970s. I remember when the General Dynamics people first arrived in my office in the mid-1970s. At the beginning of the competition among American manufacturers of fighter aircraft, Northrop with its F-5 was also involved, but it dropped out of contention fairly early in the game. So by the time I became DCM, it was General Dynamics' F-16 vs. McDonald and the F-18. I don't remember any allegations of illegal activities involved in this huge sale potential. Both companies used to come to the Embassy for briefings and discussions. I was always as even handed as I could be. In fact, there wasn't very much that the Embassy could do in that situation. Representations on the companies' behalf was really unnecessary; both had good connections with the Korean military and the Ministry of Defense. We would just tell them what we had heard when they

came to the Embassy and the representatives of both companies would tell us some of what they knew.

The 1982-85 period was quite active on the commercial side. There were many American companies eager to do business in Korea. The corruption that was rife in Korea—unrelated to US business—was partially known to us, although, as I said, the magnitude that was uncovered later came as a surprise to me. It was well known that Chun's wife and her family were involved in bribery. I suspect that the corruption was probably worse than it had been during my previous tour. That may have been due to Chun or perhaps I was simply more knowledgeable about Korea during my second tour than I was in the first. I think the Chun regime was more venal than Park's had been, just as I thought it was more dictatorial than Park's had been. I never had the same respect for Chun Doo Hwan that I had for Park Chung Hee. But I could be wrong. Neither were kind and gentle rulers; both were very tough; and Park was very smart as well. It is this intellectual capability that I think distinguished Park from Chun.

We did initiate a long term battle with the Korean government in those days over what we considered unfair trade practices—import restrictions, high tariffs, etc. These practices of course were in effect when I served in Seoul the first time, but by the early 1980s, the Korean economy was bigger and US commercial interests in Korea had increased greatly. That meant that as a government, we became much more active in the 1980s in trying to get the Koreans to open their economic system to US investments and imports. Korea exported about one-third of its GNP of which 1/3 went to the US. That made us a major market for Korean exports. But the trade was not reciprocal. As I said, there were major barriers—both tariff and non-tariff. The Koreans were also stealing our intellectual properties. The IBM representative told me one time that the Koreans were such good copiers of memory chips that they used to even mark the US patent number on the chips they manufactured—without paying royalties to the US patent holder.

So we faced major trade impediments, as there had always been, except that by the early 1980s, Korea was beginning to be a major producer in the world, no longer dependent on hand-outs. I decided that it was time to go after the Koreans on their trade practices. I started to chair a weekly meeting with the three senior economic officers in the Embassy —the Economic, Commercial and Agricultural Counselors (Don McConville, George Griffin and Dan Conable). Initially, this meeting was intended to bring them up to date on political issues which they felt had not been adequately brought to their attention. But it became very apparent that they really weren't that interested in political issues; so we made trade issues the main agenda topic. I think it was one of the best things I have ever done in the Foreign Service. The three officers began to vent their frustrations and I began to understand the major barriers that the Koreans had erected against imports and investments. Finally, I asked the three to develop a series of messages to Washington, describing the problems as they saw them—in detail—and concluding with a series of recommendations on actions that should be taken. I also charged them to draft a speech for the Ambassador which would be delivered to an audience of top Korean economists and industrialists. The tone of that speech was to be tough because we did not want Korea to become a second Japan—highly protectionist. It is true that for years, Washington had raised these issues with the Koreans, but they weren't really pursued very diligently. I wanted a different, more comprehensive, more public approach to an old subject.

So we put together some massive documentation of Korean delinquencies. I think we really stirred Washington up with this series of telegrams. In fact, we must have been the first—or among the first—to take a host country to task for its commercial behavior. Washington seemed to receive our communications with some pleasure. So over the years, starting in 1984, we started a major campaign to break Korean protectionism. Dixie's speech was the first shot. Nam Duk Woo—the former Deputy PM and senior Korean in the commercial field—was visibly annoyed by Dixie's speech; he was not accustomed to an American ambassador calling “a spade a spade.” When I asked him about the speech, he shrugged his shoulders, suggesting that if the American Ambassador

wanted to talk that way, he couldn't prevent it, but it would not be taken very seriously. I think the speech was only a first step and by itself, would not have made much of an impact. It was followed by a comprehensive enduring program which through our actions was to make it clear to the Koreans that we would do everything within our power to prevent them from becoming another Japan. I think Washington came to the conclusion that if an embassy could do this—an institution not known as an aggressive combatant of host country mistaken policies—it should join in. I don't know what the Washington institutions did on their own to pressure the Koreans, but I do know that they welcomed our proposals and supported us fully.

As I suggested, our program started about 12 months before my departure. I was not there long enough to see the fruits of out initiative, but I was very pleased that we started the ball rolling. I can't say enough for the efforts of the economic counselors. Dan Conable —a nephew of the Congressman and World Bank President—was our Agricultural Counselor; George Griffin was the Commercial Counselor following a stint as a Political Counselor in India—where he was accused by Indira Gandhi of being a CIA agent, forcing him to change specializations for a while—and Don McConville, the Economic Counselor. The three were superb and worked together in admirable fashion. The reports to Washington and the recommendations were essentially theirs; I served primarily as a catalyst. The local American Chamber of Commerce was appreciative of our efforts. The days of “kudos” from US private business had not yet arrived fully, but the Chamber was supportive. I used to see a lot of the American business community; the Embassy's doors were always open to them. Dixie had excellent rapport with the business community. He spent a lot of time with them. We saved the Chamber on one occasion when it may not have been altogether happy with us. It had prepared a booklet of a 150 pages or so of “do's and don'ts in Korea.” Fortunately, they brought the draft to us to read before issuing it. That was fortunate because had it been published as written, American business in Korea would have been dead for many years thereafter. It was a most undiplomatic document; it referred to Koreans as always smelling of “Kimchi”, as being “back stabbers”,

etc. I found it hard to believe that anyone living and doing business in Seoul would have written that sort of stuff. Not only was it wrong on its merits, but that anyone would have ever dreamed of saying things like that about their hosts was hard to believe.

I might note that I did detect some change in Korean attitude towards the US in those days. I think that the students' resentment of US policies in the early 1980s was greater than it had been in the mid-1970s—certainly I was more aware of it. In my second tour, everything was somewhat more radicalized; there was no question that political pressures were building as I have suggested. The Kwangju events of 1980 were still resonating in those years as indeed they still periodically surface even today. The students would not let go of that subject; that increasingly put us on the defensive trying to explain why we were not responsible for the actions of the Korean military because we had not released those troops from the UN command. It is doubtful that even if we had wished or commanded, that we could have stopped them from marching on Kwangju and committing the mayhem they did. I think it was clear that if the ROK military decided that it was needed to quell domestic unrest, no orders form a US general would have stopped them. But the question of US involvement or complicity kept arising, particularly during the student riots in 1984. Kwangju became a political football, used by the opposition parties to bring pressure on the government. I remember that Steve Bradner, who was the CINC's political advisor—whom I have mentioned before—and I worked very diligently on a “White Paper” which was intended to be a description of the actual events of 1980. The bottom line of the paper was that the US was absolved of any responsibility for the actions of the Korean military for the reasons I have mentioned. In fact, 1980 was somewhat of a repeat of 1960 when we had also found that we had no control over Korean military when it was faced by prospects of domestic unrest. Then, Park Chung Hee had taken troops right out of the front lines on the DMZ and moved them into Seoul to occupy strategic places. In any case, when Steve and I finished the report, we wanted to issue it publically, but it was not. I believe the Department thought it wiser not to, that it would create more controversy and not resolve the issue. We wanted to issue it because we thought it desirable to be out in

front with our story to try to head off any more adverse publicity. In fact, after I left Seoul, a “White Paper” was issued by the Department; I think it would have been better if we had done it earlier because when we did release it, I believe it was under pressure from the National Assembly and then it looked a rationale, rather than a forthright statement of events and the limitations of the UN command structure. Both Steve and I assumed that sooner or later, the US would have to publish a written commentary and we thought sooner would be better.

As I said, the Kwangju issue never seems to be buried. Most people have a natural instinct, and that is certainly true for the Koreans, to blame someone else for their own misfortune. Kwangju is also a convenient issue for those who would use it to pursue their own political agenda. Some people—like Americans—blame their government for their problems. In the case of Chun Doo Hwan, there was certainly cause to blame the Korean government for some of the misfortunes that afflicted the Koreans; but it was also convenient to blame the US because we did have a pro-consul image in the minds of many Koreans. We did indeed help sustain a series of Korean governments that might not have passed the “democratic” standard. We did maintain a relationship with Chun, Park and Rhee because the stability of the Peninsula was our most important objective. So in the minds of the opposition and the students, we were seen as power behind the throne and therefore subject to their criticism. I think historians will have a major debate on whether we unnecessarily propped up dictatorial regimes thereby placing political development in Korea far behind stability and security. I think if we were prepared to use the full range of our powers—using only legal means—and if we were prepared to run the risk of a North attack, we probably could have undermined the Chun regime. We would have had to use economic sanctions, troop withdrawals, etc. and even a public attack on Chun. Then, we might have brought Chun down. Such actions, however, even if successful, might not be responsible in light of the risks that they engendered. I don't think that there was any sentiment in the US government to take such drastic actions, given the risks and in light of the economic development blossoming in Korea, which was going to

create a base for gradual political development. As I said, it was always my opinion that democracy would come to Korea when the Koreans themselves were ready for it—i.e. when economic growth had resulted in a critical middle class mass.

I believe that in fact that is how matters developed in Korea. The peaceful passage of political leadership from Chun Doo Hwan to Rho Tae Woo to a complete democratic process really was beyond my wildest dreams and hopes. I had anticipated a violent passage from autocracy to democracy. If the US was responsible for anything that went on in Korea than we should be given credit for assisting this expansion of political rights to the Korean people. We assisted first in the economic recovery of the country after the war, then in its economic development and then in its political development.

The issue of political growth in Korea was an issue that we discussed frequently in the 1982-85 period. I wrote about the size of the middle class, its continuing growth and the political demands for power that it would eventually make on the government. During the 1984-85 period, I saw Rho Tae Woo periodically; he was then the head of the Olympic Committee. He was much more reasonable, accessible and diplomatic than his classmate Chun Doo Hwan. I thought that Rho was undoubtedly a powerful figure who might be instrumental in some way in bringing change to the Korean political process. I viewed him as someone who could be a good influence, although I had no idea that he would succeed Chun—after I left Korea.

David Blakemore and I felt very strongly about the need for increased political power sharing to include the ever growing Korean middle class. After Dave's departure, our faith in Korea's future was really tested. In 1985—I think—a group of students took over the library in our USIA building. They sat down and refused to leave. They started to write political messages on the windows. That started a major debate with the Korean government. The police immediately wanted permission to enter the building and drag out the students. I opposed that vigorously; I wanted to try to see whether we couldn't convince them to leave peacefully. So we sent Harry Dunlop, our Political Counselor, to

start a dialogue with the students; that lasted three days. He just kept talking to them. He did a magnificent job. In the meantime, in the Embassy, there was major ongoing debate. I, Steve Bradner and several other senior officers wanted to continue the dialogue; there were others, like the Station Chief and the Security Officer, who wanted the students ejected forcibly. We did not want to use the police; we thought that given time, we could talk the students out of the building. We had a very responsible and thorough discussion, chaired by Dixie. He was a great chairman listening patiently to both sides and maintaining order and civility. The pro-police action people were concerned about the US image—we looked “weak” and “vacillating.” The Korean government would certainly never have permitted this “disorder” to continue. In the final analysis, Dixie sided with us “weak kneed diplomats”, even though the government—including the Foreign Ministry, I believe—began to apply increasing pressure on us to let their police into the building to drag the students out. The government felt that the incident was an embarrassment to Korea, as I suppose it was.

By the third day, the events at the USIA building were becoming well known throughout Seoul, even though the media was not allowed to give it any coverage. The students wrote their political testaments on the windows so that all passerby knew what was going on. Of course, with each passing day, the number of Korean spectators increased, so that what the US was doing about the student invasion was well known throughout the city.

While Harry Dunlap continued the dialogue with the students, we also talked incessantly with Washington. CIA experts on “hostage” situations were brought in to counsel us over the phone. There were questions about whether we should bring food and liquids to the students. I talked to Paul Wolfowitz, the Assistant Secretary on a couple of occasions. We received a tremendous amount of attention and good support. One day, when I had to go to the USIA building to talk to Dunlap, someone took my picture which then appeared in the “New York Times”. Then I got calls from all over the US, from friends who wanted to know what I was doing. I think the US press gave us very good and favorable coverage. My Korean friends—like Yi Hong Goo (recently the Prime Minister and then a university

professor), who were essentially spectators, gave me good feed-back. They advised us to continue down our path; it was good advice which we followed. Eventually, the students left the building and the issue was resolved peacefully and I think to our credit.

My motivation during those days was my belief, shared by Steve Bradner—who essentially represented the UN command—and many others, that the USIA incident was an opportunity to show the Koreans how democracy really works. It is a system that required dialogue and patience and certainly abhors force such as the police would have undoubtedly used—when the issue was a political one. The great irony was that when Dunlop, after three grueling days, finally talked the students into leaving the building and we had negotiated a peaceful exit and departure, as the students hit the street, the police grabbed them and threw them in paddy wagons. You could see the billy clubs flying inside the wagons, but we made strong representations and most of the students were released by the police within 12 hours and sent home. Some of the ring leaders were jailed and sentenced to jail, even though we did not press trespassing charges against the students.

All this happened in a period when we were having problems with hostage taking in the Middle East and other places. Our situation was not a hostage situation, but some saw it as US inability to protect its own people and property. In fact, it was a signal lesson on democratic development, which rarely moves without some disruptions.

Let me now return to comment about the security situation on the Peninsula. By 1982, we had passed through the time during which President Carter had announced plans to withdraw the 2nd Division. Although that never materialized, the very announcement raised the threat of a Northern invasion. Our intelligence indicated that the North had moved more troops and equipment to the front lines. Whether the North's movements were linked to Carter's words or happened coincidentally, I don't know, but it as clear that the North was strengthening its position above the 38th Parallel. By 1982, the North was in a much more threatening posture than had been true in 1977. Nevertheless, I did not believe that the North was a greater threat than it had been earlier. In fact, I remember

Dick Ericson telling me that in about 1968, the North had really been aggressive and that there had been many serious fire fights with many casualties. That was followed by the “Blue House raid” and the “Pueblo” incident. So in the late 1960s and early 1970s the tension were very high. I did not think that that was the situation in 1982.

My concern for the troop build up was also always ameliorated by the fact that there hadn't been any prolonged major instances of North-South violent confrontation either along the DMZ or anywhere else. There were incidents such as the one in the China Sea that I mentioned earlier. I mean there were always minor incidents of fire exchanges—in which people died—but I didn't feel that any ever developed into serious situations. The South of course always painted a very dark picture of the threat; after all, it was in Chun's interest to do so since it gave him reason to maintain a high state of security alert and to repress his own people in the name of “security”. In my mind, the Korean government's continual harping on the threat from the North became something like the little boy who continually cried “wolf.” It kept talking about the imminent major attack, which of course never came. After a while, I think that line ceased to have much impact on me, although from time to time, tensions along the DMZ rose and fell, as they had done since the end of the Korean war. There were periodic clashes, but, as I suggested, none that indicated that the North was considering any major attack. Our intelligence collection capability had increased technically from my previous tour, but we never had agents in the North and therefore lacked real good intelligence. Without that input, it was very difficult if not impossible to divine the thought of Kim Il Sung and his cohorts. What we knew—which was militarily important—was from technical means observations, but on political questions, we knew practically nothing.

One event that I can well remember was Private White's defection to North Korea. That raised a major concern for General Sennewald, who took it as a real blow to our military, and it occupied the command's attention for an extended period. Another was the defection of a young Soviet diplomat, who was on the North Korean side of the truce village and all of sudden dashed to the South across the line that had been drawn down

the middle of the village after the “tree cutting” incident of 1976. He was chased by a horde of North Korean soldiers, who were immediately surrounded by Southern troops. Fortunately, the Swedish Armistice Commission representative happen to be there at the time and at some risk to his own life, managed to prevent any further collisions—probably the death of the North Korean guards who were shooting ducks surrounded by our and South Korean troops. He ordered the North troops to get back to their side of the line and the incident never developed further. The Soviet defector was taken by helicopter to Yongsan, where he was placed in a golf car and driven across the golf course to a safe house. He was there for several days, undergoing interrogation both from American and South Korean representatives. When he was released by our authorities he went to Boston, attended Boston University I believe and put himself through school by being a waiter. He was very bright; I think I met him briefly while he was in one of our guest houses. He was well guarded the whole time he was in Seoul for his own protection as well as ours. As a relatively junior officer, he was not a fountain of information, but he was important as a Soviet defector.

I have previously mentioned my opposition to taking visitors to the tunnels that the North had dug under the DMZ. In the first place, it was a violation of the truce agreement and secondly, it just reinforced that atmosphere of tensions that “could break out in major fighting at any time.” As I said, I didn't think that to be the case at all and therefore never took visitors to the tunnels nor did I go myself. The US military did and some of our Embassy people may have done so. When Livsey succeeded Sennewald, the South Koreans proposed the construction of a restaurant in the DMZ, along with observation towers to look at the “perfidious” tunnels. It was a sheer propaganda effort. The South felt that since the North had violated the truce agreement by digging the tunnels, the South had the right to build a restaurant and observation tower so that people could see concrete evidence of the North's aggressive behavior. My opposition was overridden and the building was begun in the DMZ.

Cardinal Kim was still a major figure in Korea. I used to see him in the 1982-85 period as I had done earlier. As he was in the earlier period, I still found the Cardinal to be one of the keenest observers of the Korean political scene. He was very reliable, although he was very careful in his choice of words. You had to listen very closely to understand his message. I certainly had the impression that he felt that the domestic political situation was more tense than it had been during my earlier tour and that in fact the situation was becoming increasingly tense. I am sure that my views, as I have expressed them earlier, were greatly influenced by the Cardinal's observations.

I don't believe that our relationships with the American missionary community improved much from the mid-1970 period. We were not in close contact with the radical element, although we saw all of them and got along well with those espousing more conservative views. I doubt that the more liberal missionaries had any more favorable view of the Embassy than they had during my previous tour. I think we had less contact with them, partly because the Maryknollers led by Father Cochran were somewhat less vigorous in their condemnation of the South Korean regime.

Father Bransfield—a scion of a rich brewery family—would come to see me periodically. I liked Mike, and he used me as sort of “father confessor” which is a strange role reversal in itself. He found it useful to talk to me. He worked with Korean teenagers in Inchon; many of them apparently needed a lot of help and the Father was doing his best. He did get involved to some extent in “liberation” theology, which was alive and well among the Maryknollers. He came to me one time because he had published a book, the writing of which I think was still within tolerated limits. What was not acceptable was the drawings in the book. One that I remember well was of Christ on the Cross, with a thousand bleeding mouths all over his body. It was strange and horrifying, drawn by a Korean youngster who in his anxiety to make a statement, had gone over the bounds of decency. There were other drawings of big fat businessmen sitting on small people from labor unions, etc. The drawings were just too much for the regime and the book was banned. The

government had suggested some remedial action that might have taken the Father off the hook. He was faced with being expelled—essentially—or doing what the ROK government had suggested. He wrestled with the issue for a while and decided to accept the Korean government's suggestions and stayed for a while longer working with the Korean kids.

There were many incidents of that kind in the 1982-85 period. I once attended a dinner meeting of radical Korean ministers. I did that partly at least to irk the government. My attendance was well noted and a lot of people got really upset with me. I admired those people who risked their lives to pursue political issues about which they felt very strongly. I did spend a lot of my time on political dissidents, such as Kim Dae Jung, Moon Ik Kwan and other “professional prisoners”; i.e. people who dared the government to put them in prison. Some, like Moon, I thought were kind of nutty, but I gave considerable thought to what the US government could do about those problems of human rights violations. I knew that we could only have a marginal impact, but every once in a while, when some outrageous action had been taken by the government, I would go to a Ministry and pound my fist on a desk.

I had known Kim Dae Jung from my first tour when I used to have regular contacts, but in the 1982-85 period Dixie and I made a conscious decision that it would be inappropriate for either the Ambassador or the DCM to see Kim; it would have inflamed the government without any benefit either for Kim, the cause of human rights or the US. But the Embassy did maintain contacts with him through the Political Counselor. We also saw Mrs Kim at the Embassy on a couple of occasions. In retrospect, perhaps I should have put up an effort vis a vis KDJ, but it was clear that Dixie didn't want either of the top officers of the Embassy to be seeing Kim Dae Jung. At one point, I think we received a cable from Mike Armacost, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs asking whether either the Ambassador or the DCM shouldn't make an effort to see Kim. Our response was that any such action would bring a major response from the government without benefit to anyone; it was not worth it. On the other hand, I did see Kim Young Sam all the time; the two of us would occasionally go a “Kisaeng” house—places which I knew; I would arrange an evening

there with him, although he didn't drink very much so that it was more or less a “working” social occasion. Both Kims, I believe, came to the Residence at least once for a Forth of July party in 1985. Kim Young Sam came to my house for lunch a couple of times. He was an opposition leader but the government didn't fear him nearly as much as it did Kim Dae Jung. In light of the political situation in Korea at the time, it didn't really seem that either of the Kims nor any of the other opposition leaders had much of a future.

I must say that I viewed Kim Young Sam as a political opportunist. His reputation, particularly among some of my academic friends, was that he was not too smart. I suspect that that feeling may not have changed even now that he is the President. My first hand impressions were not quite as stark as that; I don't think we ever got many insights from him, but I suspect that he felt that it was worthwhile having people know that he had contact with the American Embassy; it was probably a plus for him. He always tried to cover all the bases—that was a modus operandi that he had developed much earlier in his career, and he kept it up for as long as I knew him.

We had very good relationships with the Japanese Embassy. Ambassador Maeda had served in Korea when he was a young man; so he knew the language. Unfortunately, he also had learned to speak English, but his pronunciation was so bad one could hardly understand him. Nevertheless, he, his DCM, and we had a “home to home” lunch arrangement; one month we would meet at his residence and one month at ours. I always felt that those exchanges benefitted the Japanese more than they did us; we always had better information about Korean affairs, which is understandable in light of the bitter view the Koreans and Japanese had of each other. This was particularly true on military matters, where we obviously had a major edge since we worked with the Korean military on a daily basis. We tried to keep the Japanese informed on matters that raised tensions on the Peninsula such as tunnels or planes flying near or over the DMZ or events in the Sea of Japan. On the other hand, I think they may have withheld some material from us. They viewed the Koreans through a different prism than we did. But the Japanese did cooperate with us and I think in general it was a very profitable relationship for both of us.

There was not any discussion of commercial issues—an area where we competed with them in Korea.

That brings me back to the nuclear plants. We did have European competition for the construction of additional plants—the French and the Swiss. Framatone and Asa Brown Boveri had been bidding for nuclear plant contracts for many years and they were still involved in 1982-85. But I don't think we ever had to complain about an “uneven playing field” or “unusual” French or Swiss tactics. The French Ambassador was a very good personal friend—he just retired as Consul General in New York and I don't ever recall complaining to him about any Framatone tactics.I mentioned earlier our major anti-fraud visa efforts. I would like to talk at greater length about that. Ken Keller, the Consul General, and I arrived in Seoul at about the same time. My first reaction to Ken was that he was a somewhat dour man; he was certainly taciturn. He was born near the Idaho-Canada border where he lived on a “stump” farm—i.e. where all the trees had been cut down leaving just the stumps. As I mentioned, I learned that he was in fact a brilliant officer; he had graduated from the University of Montana with a straight 4.0 grade average. As part of my general routine, I used to have regular meetings with Ken, during which he would keep me informed about the operations of his section. Bruce Beardsley was Ken's deputy. They set up a rigorous system of inspections of the visa operations. There had been rumors about fraud in the Consular Section for many, many years with allegations being made that it was possible to buy visas. Ken apparently had done a lot of work on this issue even before he arrived and when he arrived, he issued a set of guidelines for his young officers. Following these guidelines not too many months later, one of these young officers—Mark Fitzpatrick, a brilliant fellow who later worked for me in Wellington—was reviewing a visa petition from Los Angeles, in support of a Korean trying to emigrate. It looked funny to him; so he reviewed the previous day's visa petitions and found a petition filed allegedly by some one in New York. He concluded from the identical “typewritten signature” that the two petitions must have been typed on the same typewriter. That

brought him to the hypothesis that in fact both petitions had in fact been typed in Seoul, down the street in one of the many visa broker's offices.

That was a first clue. By going through files, Keller and his staff found approximately 1000 fraudulent visas—immigrant and non-immigrant—that had been issued in the previous six months. This was the result of a careful, thorough step by step investigation which finally resulted in the termination of 11 local employees and police raids on four visa brokerage firms. Among other things, we found that our messenger, a Korean employee who used to deliver the unclassified mail in his shopping cart, used to screen all the visa material that had come from the States. He would take all interesting visa correspondence to one of these brokerage houses, turning those outfits into replicas of an Embassy visa office—filled with all the forms and petitions. In fact, these brokerage houses could process all visa applications with these, forging all the required documents. Whatever official assistance they needed, they got from our Korean employees.

With the assistance of those eleven corrupted employees, the brokers were making small fortunes. They were charging $10,000 for an immigrant visa and $5,000 for a non-immigrant visa. Ken Keller deserves the full credit for unmasking and pursuing this fraud; it was brilliant work. He recruited assistance from a variety of intelligence and military units. He managed to penetrate one of the fraudulent operations. From time to time, Washington experts would come out and provide advice, but it was mostly Keller and the Embassy.

There was minimal assistance from the Korean government; that was very frustrating and upset me no end. I took Ken to see then Secretary General Lee Bum Suk—a friend and a well known Americaphile, who was unfortunately killed in Burma along with many of his colleagues in that North Korean terrorist action. In any case, Lee listened, but nothing happened. The ROK was just not interested; it was in its interest to have as many Koreans leave Korea as possible; perhaps it made control easier. In any event, it didn't care that someone got an illegal immigrant visa or that one person moved ahead of his or her fellow citizens in the long wait for a visa. It was no skin off the government's nose. What actions

the government did take were symbolic at best. At the root of all the problems was of course the fact that although we issued 30,000 immigrant visas each year to Koreans the demand far outstripped the legal limitation. Given that situation, there was bound to be bribery and malfeasance; I don't know how far it went, but it certainly did involve a number of our own employees—almost entirely Korean although there was at least one American suspect. There may over the years have been more Americans involved in this traffic, but we will never know.

Keller was very distressed by his predecessor's lack of action. In fact, that officer went on to Manila where I believe he was caught in a corruption case. Apparently he was not a paragon of virtue. Ken's serious pursuit of the fraud started in 1982 and lasted through my tour in Seoul even after Ken was replaced my last year by Andy Antippas. It was Ken's view—a correct one, I believe—that you can never in a Korean situation completely eliminate fraud and bribery; you just had to be continually vigilant. Andy was not quite as diligent about the issues as Ken had been; neither were some Ambassadors who followed Dixie. These people I think were much too cavalier about caring whether someone illegally went to the head of the waiting list; their attitude was almost “Oh, well, they are all Korean and what do we care which Koreans get in?” I think that was a totally unacceptable view. The last person on the waiting list might come up for eligibility in ten or fifteen years; if he or she kept getting bypassed by line jumpers, they would never get an immigrant visa. The applicant who jumped the waiting list did so by bribery and obtaining fraudulent petitions. I think it was an entirely unacceptable practice which we, as Americans, could absolutely not condone. It may not have made any difference to the number of Koreans who would have immigrated into the US; that was set by law, but it did make a difference to which Koreans were admitted, when.

In addition, there were non-immigrant applicants who through these fraudulent brokerage system obtained visas with full intention to remain in the US and then apply for “green cards” or somehow set up permanent residence in the US. Again, there were too many of our staff who were not sufficiently disturbed by that practice. They couldn't care

whether the Koreans cheated on each other or even on us. As I said, I think that view was erroneous and damaging to our own image. By the time I left, we had cleaned out the corruption in our own visa section—at least that we knew about. But the pressure to get a visa continued and I suspect that some of the fraud was still going on and probably still does today—as it probably does in every visa issuance establishment where demand exceeds supply. My view was that although I knew that we would not put an end to the fraud and abuse, we had an obligation to pursue it and minimize it to the greatest extent possible. That was Keller's view and he convinced me of its correctness.

Let me now briefly comment on my recollections of the KAL 007 incident. I believe that the first report of the incident came from our military, although it took a number of days before we really knew what had happened. It was a tremendous tragedy that brought shock to all. I knew the sister of one of the victims; many of the people in the Embassy knew someone who was either in the plane or was related to one of the victims. So the tragedy was heartfelt in the American community, as well as the Korean one. The first days were consumed by general grief and concern. Dixie was at his best under such circumstances. Then began the difficult task of reconstructing events. We knew fairly early that Flight KAL 007 had gone down, but why and precisely where took time to discover. It was the Indication Center at Yongsan (a military intelligence unit) that began to put the pieces of information together. From Northern Japan—a listening post—it had taped the conversation between the Soviet fighter pilots and their ground controllers. That gave us clear evidence of what had happened. The pilot had been ordered to shoot by a controller in Central Russia. I believe that the incident was not a deliberate provocation by anyone, but rather a Russian error in judgement—that is confusion about the nature of the plane that had wandered off course. The Soviets simply made a wrong decision to shoot it down, and I think the tapes proved that.

Washington was soon heard from trying to get information. We then became very busy trying to fill in the blanks. In a few days, President Reagan took to the airwaves blasting the Soviet action in his characteristically “evil empire” fashion. He blasted them for

purposefully shooting down a civilian flight and killing many innocent civilians. I was not at all happy with the Reagan speech because by that time we in Seoul had come to understand the error that the Soviets made; I thought Reagan's accusation did not altogether fit the facts—at least as we knew them. I don't condone the Soviet action; it was bad judgement and they should be held accountable. But they were not guilty of the perfidious behavior of which Reagan accused them.

I think that Washington over-reacted to the downing of KAL 007 and I thought that the President was espousing his hard line for political reasons—not necessarily supported by the facts, at least as I knew them. He exaggerated the Soviet iniquity; I thought that that was unfortunate. Somewhat in contrast, the South Koreans were not nearly as bombastic. They were never as concerned about the Soviets as we were; they were much more paranoid about North Korea. I am sure they were happy with the Reagan speech and they may well—behind the scenes in Washington—have urged that the President give a speech of the sort he did. One of the problems of being in an Embassy such as Seoul is that you are never certain what is happening in Washington.

I had early confirmation of my view of what happened by talking to the director of intelligence at the command in Yongsan—a brigadier general. I had a long conversation with him during which we reviewed all aspects of the incident and he agreed that the exchange between the Soviet pilot and the ground controllers was evidence that the shoot-down was a tragic accident and not a deliberate mass murder. The Soviets didn't fully understand what they were doing; they also had obviously been concerned by the presence of one of our “spy” planes which had been spotted some hours earlier.

Soon after the accident the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board people came out. They were very careful in their analysis and very professional; I was greatly impressed. I knew something about flying safety and procedures, having served as an Air Force pilot. I thought that their findings as provided us in their last briefing was right on the mark. They thought that the Korean pilots of 007 had probably accidentally programmed

a 10% error into their computers before they left Anchorage and that despite the checks that were made before flight, it was perfectly possible for the same mistake being repeated three times during the three checks that a pilot goes through before take off. It was clear that this scenario was most likely if one looked at the track of the plane from Anchorage until it went down. The plane was continually 10% off in its flight path before and after it left the Alaska Air Defense Zone and that mistake was never corrected. I think that is what Seymour Hersch concluded in his book on the subject, by the way.

Charlie Cho was the CEO of Korean Air Line and came under a lot of fire. Dixie was close to him personally and knew what troubles Cho was going through. I think KAL acted responsibly; it tried to get information out as soon as possible and then to help the families as much as possible. It was clear that KAL had a major problem on its hands; Cho was under tremendous political and public pressure and condemnation. The downing of KAL 007 was a major tragedy, especially in Korea. There were many rumors about why the plane had wandered off course. One of the suppositions was that the airline or the pilot was just trying to save fuel and took the more direct route which would have taken him over Soviet territory. In fact, Cho had offered incentives to his pilots to try to speed up their flights at reduced fuel consumption. That just added fuel to the speculation that KAL was trying to “cut corners.” I think that was a cynical Korean view of fellow Koreans, which horrified us to some extent. Because there were some Americans on board, we had to pursue this issue for several months after the incident, but that was not a major problem for us.

While on the subject of tragedies, let me talk a little about the Burma assassinations. The North Koreans perpetrated a terrorist attack on a Korean official delegation, headed by Chun Doo Hwan. It took place at a major Burmese shrine—pillars, domes, etc. The explosion collapsed the roof killing 16 members of the Korean delegation, including the Foreign Minister Lee Bum Suk and Kim Jae Ik, the senior economic expert in the Korean government, Han Byung Chun, the former Korean Ambassador to the US, and the Trade Minister. We knew most of the deceased and some were very close friends of the

Embassy and had been for many years. Chun Doo Hwan, the presumptive target, was late in arriving for the ceremony at the shrine and therefore was never in danger.

The first thing that had to be done was to figure who was the perpetrator and capture him if possible. We assumed that it was the North Koreans because the target surely was Chun Doo Hwan. I think we put all the troops on the DMZ on alert because we didn't know what the North Korean follow-up actions might be. In fact, there was not any change in North Korean military posture. What was interesting was the exchanges about the terrorists—two of whom had been captured by the Burmese. As I recall, we in Seoul had a lot of exchanges with Charlie Salmon, then our Charge' in Rangoon. One of the captured terrorists had a grenade and had tried to blow himself up. Finally, the Burmese got confessions from these two terrorists. Dixie did a wonderful job during this period; he paid his respects to all of the families of the assassinated Koreans. He spent a lot of time with them and I think, in light of Korean culture, this was a tremendously important gesture which was warmly appreciated not only by the families but by the Koreans generally.

I was horrified by the North Korean action. It was a terrible heinous deed. It was such a clumsy effort to try to over-throw Chun Doo Hwan. I think they expected to destabilize the South through their efforts and perhaps bring to power a regime more to their liking. I don't remember that tensions had risen in the previous few weeks or months, but I think it was probably more an opportunity to take a crack at Chun Doo Hwan because he didn't travel outside of Korea very much. Burma was a country which was accessible to North Koreans and where security was not as strict as it was in other countries. It was an incredible act which reinforced my view that the North Koreans regime was brutal and cruel. In fact, the attempt on his life gave Chun some sympathy from his people that he would not have gotten otherwise. Unfortunately, as I remember, Chun came back and gave a speech in which he gloried in the fact that he was still alive and that therefore all was well for his country. I think that seriously dampened the sympathy that might have lasted longer had he not opened his mouth; the speech made it clear that he was primarily concerned about himself and only secondarily about his government's officials who had given their lives

in the service of their country. I suspect that Gun's tears when he had coffee with me at the Nadja Hotel—an incident I have described earlier—stemmed from the characteristic showed by Chun's reaction to the Burma incident. Chun was an egomaniac and a terrible human being besides. He deserves his current address—jail.

In retrospect, I think the 1982-85 period was one when we pursued our fundamental objectives of stability on the Peninsula and the maintenance of good relationships with the South Korean government with moderate success.

1) First of all, peace was maintained.

2) We served to a limited degree the cause of human rights, although probably not as vigorously as any of us would have liked. The Chun Doo Hwan regime was not a plus for Korea in this respect. There was obviously a growing desire among Koreans for more political participation, but it was repressed by the regime. As I said, it was not clear what the US could have done to accelerate political growth; it was a Korean issue that had to be resolved by the Koreans themselves, which I think by now they have done.

3) The political cooperation between the two countries was quite satisfactory. For example, semi-annual talks between the Department's Policy Planning Staff and its Korean counterpart started during this period. There were also meetings between representatives of other sectors of American and Korean society. Parliamentarians visited back and forth. We had some academic exchanges and meetings. There were meetings between businessmen, journalists, etc. There weren't as many such meetings as there are today because Korea was not as significant a power as it is today. But even in the 1980s, I went to conferences in Aspen and Washington on security and other issues on the Peninsula. Then of course there were the annual meetings of the Korean Defense Minister and the Secretary of Defense. Korea has always been a pet subject for warriors. I am not sure these confabs produced many concrete results, but they did stimulate thinking and kept Korea in the forefront of top US policy makers.

4) We served our interests beyond the Peninsula during this time. We were always aware of Northeast Asia regional security concerns. Whenever I went through Tokyo, I would take some time to discuss Northeast Asia issues with my colleagues in the Embassy. There was considerable exchange of views among our embassies in Northeast Asia and even in Southeast Asia. These were a plus.

5) The economic relationship, in which we pursued diligently the opening of the Korean markets, as we are still doing today, was conducted in our mutual interest. In general, I think both the political and economic US-Korean relationships progressed during this period, providing a base for both economic and political growth in South Korea. We added to the base for the progress that took place subsequently and which I think will continue to take place.

For me personally, my tour as DCM was the most fulfilling and rewarding assignment of my Foreign Service career, even including my two subsequent tours as ambassador. As I think all of us who have served in Korea have noticed, if things seemed quiet in the morning, you could be sure it would not last for a whole day. It was always a five ring circus: political issues—stability and human rights—, economic, consular as well as security were a constant. In addition, there were two other matters that kept us engaged. One, which had been a thorn in our sides for many years, was the need to obtain a new Chancery. When there was nothing else to keep me occupied, I could always tackle the building issue. I could always find a new angle to work on, as is still true today. We still have not built a Chancery and are still occupying a ROK building that according to written agreement we should have returned to the Korean government certainly by the end of 1970s.

Then there were always administrative problems of all sorts that could take up my time. I enjoyed administrative challenges. I used to meet once a week with Jerry Mandersheid, the Administrative Counselor, to see what was on his mind. For example, some of our houses had asbestos in them. We worked out what to do about that—remove it! Then

one time we had one American employee who tried to kill another. We had a man who molested his daughter. There was never any lack of administrative problems. So Seoul was never quiet. If it wasn't some substantive issue, then there were many others to keep me busy. Not only was I busy all the time, but I learned all the time, so this was a period of personal growth. Being an Ambassador in New Zealand was not nearly as challenging nor as active as being the DCM in Korea. I certainly preferred to be the Number 2 in Seoul than being the Number 1 in Wellington, although the perks that go with an ambassadorial post as well as the credit that is given you are better than those of a DCM. But from a work stand point, Seoul was more fulfilling. I suppose in the end though it was due to the fact that there was a great difference in the importance of Seoul to US Interests. If things went awry in Korea, that could have major consequences. I was not especially consciously cognizant of the consequences of our actions while in Korea, but in retrospect I have become aware of this fact.

Q: In 1986, you were appointed as Ambassador to New Zealand. How did that occur?

CLEVELAND: Dixie Walker, I believe, was the catalyst. He did not have an overly enthusiastic view of the incumbent Ambassador—Monroe Browne—who was very, very conservative. I think that Monroe Browne probably tried his best, but he may in some part have aggravated some of the problems we had with New Zealand at the time. Dixie had met Browne at some of the Chiefs of Mission conferences and used to return muttering that if anyone thought that he, Dixie, was conservative, they had not heard of Monroe Browne. Browne had been in Wellington for three years and it was time for him to leave, even though he was very reluctant to leave. In the final analysis, I think I was chosen as a replacement because I was a professional Foreign Service officer and the US needed someone experienced to handle a growing political problem revolving around the question of keeping New Zealand nuclear free and the visits of US ships. That issue had gotten out of hand and I think the administration felt that a professional was required to deal with it...or to be seen dealing with it. In fact, I think I was the first Foreign Service officer to be appointed Ambassador to New Zealand since the late 1940s, and there weren't many

before that. I left Seoul at the beginning of November, 1985 and arrived in Wellington on January 8, 1986. The processing and confirmation of my appointment was unusually rapid. I had no problems with the Senate or any other part of the process. Monroe Browne was not a happy man; he came to Washington but refused to see me for a while. He finally "granted me an interview" during which he stared at the opposite wall throughout our conversation. This meeting took place in his suite in the Madison Hotel. There was no question that he was hurt by his recall and may also have resented being replaced by a Foreign Service officer. He had not been offered another mission; in fact, he told me that he had had greater ambitions than being Ambassador to New Zealand—he originally (in 1982) was shooting for Japan or China. Since he did not get either of those posts, he had hoped to use Wellington as a podium to comment on issues that touched on the whole of East Asia and hopefully to influence US policy in that region of the world.

While in Washington, I was briefed on the nuclear ship issue. I was told that the New Zealand Labor Party, then the governing party, had decided on strictures that made it impossible for us to bring our Navy vessels into New Zealand ports. The Party had said —and was in the process of translating into specific legislation when I arrived—that the Prime Minister had to decide whether there were nuclear weapons on board any vessel docking or sailing in New Zealand waters. We had determined on the other hand that we could not answer any questions concerning our armaments as a matter of national security. We had for a long time taken the position that we would not confirm or deny the presence of nuclear weapons on any of our ships. And we could not have a Prime Minister doing that for us. When we refused to divulge that information in 1985 at the time of the visit of the destroyer Buchanan, the government turned us down. Later, we informed the New Zealanders that if they insisted on putting the Labor Party policies into law, it would present us with a serious dilemma. Under those circumstances, if we decided to bring a ship into New Zealand waters, we would either act contrary to our own policy or New Zealand law. We would could not do either. That would leave us with only one answer and

that would be to avoid New Zealand waters entirely. That in turn meant suspending our defense commitment.

Secretary of State, George Shultz, was upset with the New Zealanders as was the whole Department. DoD was upset. In fact, I think the Washington view was almost unanimous both in the Executive and the Legislative branches. Congressman Steve Solarz, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on East Asia, was certainly unhappy with the New Zealanders as were most members of Congress. I think Washington felt that the New Zealanders were just going too far. Not bringing our ships to New Zealand was probably not a military problem; we were much more concerned with the precedent that the New Zealanders were establishing. That point had been made repeatedly to the New Zealanders; our real concern was with Japan where our security position in East Asia could be seriously damaged if that country were made to follow the New Zealand lead. Beyond that region, the same issue had arisen in Denmark—in fact, later on after I arrived, it was a very close call there and Denmark almost followed New Zealand.

Shultz told me personally before I went to Wellington that he had talked to Prime Minister Lange about the Labor Party policy; he thought that Lange had not lived up to his promise to avoid confrontation over nuclear ships. Wolfowitz, the Assistant Secretary for EA, told me specifically that Lange had promised Shultz that he would do his best to convince his fellow Labor Party members to accept a nuclear ship visit policy that we could live with. Lange, as far as we knew, had not done anything along those lines. He had gone to the Tokalu Islands at the time the critical decisions were being made by his Party regarding the Buchanan, and upon his return he accepted the decisions made by the Party, which had been propelled primarily by the left-wing members of the Party.

My instructions were essentially to try to do the best I could to calm the passions while at the same time making it clear to the New Zealanders that we would not change our policy and that if they persisted in putting the Labor Party policy into legislation, then we would be forced to suspend our defense commitments as spelled out in the ANZUS

treaty. If we could not make visits to New Zealand ports and could not navigate their waters, we could not then fulfill our commitments under any defense arrangements. As Congressman Solarz said: “We can't get the stuff there in jeeps!” I did try in my first six months to convince them not to pass the legislation, which had been drafted in damaging terms, but it was a vain attempt, as Shultz had predicted to me it would be.

Why did this happen? I think some New Zealanders—particularly the ideologues—had become quite uncomfortable with the ANZUS alliance. New Zealand had more than its share of pacifists and military alliances were just not philosophically acceptable. Then there was the general nervousness about nuclear weapons. Thirdly, there was a hangover of Vietnam resentment. Finally, I think many, if not most, New Zealanders saw no threat to their national survival in the world of the mid-1980s. In fact, many did not really see any military threat in the world and felt that the US had hyped the Cold War. Many had forgotten WWII when without us they could have easily become a Japanese colony. So there were a number of reasons expressed, both singly and together, which led many New Zealanders to see the world through a prism entirely different from ours and most of the rest of the world. It was quite clear that a majority of New Zealanders did not want our ships in their ports.

On the other hand, roughly 66% of New Zealanders wanted to maintain in the ANZUS alliance. In fact, they were never able to resolve the conflict between belonging to an alliance and not abiding by its provisions or at least taking unilateral actions that were detrimental to that alliance. I believe that it was the philosophical view of the left wing members of the Labor Part that drove the debate. At the same time, there were domestic political requirements, such as the necessity for economic reforms, which contributed to the decision that New Zealand took on the nuclear ships. I always felt—although none of the participants would ever admit this directly—that essentially the right wing of the Labor Party, whom one might expect would be more concerned about maintaining ANZUS, was actually neutralized by the promise it received from the left wing that economic reform, as outlined by the right wing, could proceed. That reform called for a fairly sharp turn towards

free enterprise and a market economy for New Zealand. Left wing Labor leader Helen Clark confirmed the trade-off in conversations with me in 1996. The left wing would not stand in the way of economic reform as supported by the right wing in exchange for the right wing's acquiescence to the left wing nuclear ship visit policy. Whether or not there was an explicit deal, I don't know for certain—I doubt it was put in writing—but that is what actually happened. The speculation that such a deal had been made became almost conventional wisdom in New Zealand. It is entirely true that New Zealand turned from being one of the most centrally controlled economies in the free world—functioning about as well as the Soviet economy—into an almost unimaginable free market economy, which has become an incredible success.

I should note that a couple of wives of our officers sympathized with the New Zealanders. I believe that the American staff itself, basically supported the US view and positions. We had considerable discussion within the Embassy on the nuclear war ship issue and I never heard otherwise. In light of that debate, we changed our rhetoric somewhat after I arrived. In our statement of goals and objectives, we moved the objective of “promoting the best possible relations with New Zealand” from first to second place. The first objective became support to the maximum extent of US security interests, including specifically insistence on the US Navy's “neither confirm nor deny” policy. I don't recall that we had any fundamental internal controversy; as I said, I think the staff was in full support of our efforts.

When I arrived in New Zealand in January 1986, even after hearing Shultz' prediction, I was hopeful that I could reason with the New Zealanders. I didn't know whether I could turn them around, but as the new boy on the block, I certainly had some hopes of having some positive effect on the situation. I had the highest respect for Secretary Shultz and knew that he was a very good judge of situations. So my optimism was certainly tinged with reality. The first question that I had to address was what I would say about the warship issue; would I just mouth the usual line or should and could I put a little more positive spin to our position. I concluded that neither of those tactics would be at all useful. So, after getting off the plane, I answered the expected press queries by saying that I

had just arrived and that I first had to listen to the views of the New Zealanders before expressing my views on the situation. I promised that after having learned all I could, I would then comment. I think that approach was well received and bought me some time. But that is all.

As things developed, the New Zealanders passed the highly restrictive legislation in December, 1986. We never formally withdrew from of ANZUS. To do so, would have created more problems for us: 1) we would have difficulties coming to new bilateral arrangements with Australia—the atmosphere was much different in the late 1980s than it had been in the 1950s when ANZUS was formed; and 2) it would have shut the door for New Zealand to reenter an alliance. By keeping ANZUS going—even in an emasculated form—it left open the possibility for a reemergence of the alliance without further negotiations. We were hopeful that New Zealand would eventually revoke the legislation it had passed and rejoin the alliance. So six months after I arrived, we just suspended our defense commitment to New Zealand.

When I returned to Washington for consultations in June, 1986, I expressed the view that New Zealand should not be booted out of ANZUS and opposed suspending the defense commitment until New Zealand first took actions that would justify some reaction on our part. I wanted to keep the monkey on New Zealand's back. But I didn't consider my point to be critical, so that when Shultz took a different tack in Manila a few weeks later, it didn't upset me particularly. After Shultz had a bilateral meeting with Lange in Manila, after the ASEAN meeting, he talked to the press and much to Lange's surprise, said that the US remained friends with New Zealand, but no longer allies. Under the circumstances, the US could not continue its defense commitment to that country. I was not in that meeting, although I had requested Washington approval for me to go to Manila, but the Department felt that the precedent of only US ambassadors to ASEAN countries attending should be maintained.

I think Lange did not expect Shultz to suspend the defense commitment at that time. In fact, it is my understanding that there was no discussion of such action in the private Shultz-Lange meeting. So not only did the decision catch Lange by surprise, but he was also surprised by the public announcement. In fact, there is some controversy about the accuracy of the memcon of that meeting on another issue as well. The US version had Shultz saying that Lange should recognize that an American warship might well enter a New Zealand harbor at some point carrying nuclear weapons. The Shultz statement was conditional; i.e. it “might” happen. He didn't state categorically that it would happen; Shultz just conjectured that it might happen. The New Zealand record indicated that Shultz stated that the US would definitely send such a ship. New Zealand's Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Merv Norrish, who did participate in the meeting, was absolutely sure that the New Zealand record was correct; he was certain that Shultz had said that New Zealand had to face the fact that sooner or later the US would send a warship with nuclear weapons aboard into a New Zealand port. That phraseology was just unacceptable to Lange. Lange later in Bangkok publicly blasted the Secretary for his comments. I believe that in fact the difference in the records was not crucial. I think any mention of nuclear-armed warships in New Zealand ports was just unacceptable. I don't think that whatever Shultz said made any difference to the policy positions of either country. It only became an issue because Lange let fly a broadside against the Secretary and US policy. He tried to place blame for any damage to US-New Zealand relations on Shultz' back.

In retrospect, I would say that we were right in doing what we did. We really didn't have any options because of the precedent problem. After all the Chinese were letting our ships dock in their ports without questions being asked. The Indians were doing the same thing. I was disgusted when Rajiv Gandhi later came to Wellington, embraced Prime Minister Lange and said that the Indians admired the New Zealand's nuclear policy. It was disingenuous at best because while praising Lange's policy, the Indians were allowing our ships into their ports without asking questions. What hypocrisy! So I think we were right and we never tried to soft-pedal our stand. Even Lange admitted that Shultz had been

quite clear all along about our position. We gave the New Zealanders lots of warnings about the consequences of their policy and did exactly what we said we would do.

If I have a reservation about our actions it is that at the beginning of the debate we might have made a greater effort to convince them of the desirability of maintaining an alliance, which required the docking of warships in New Zealand harbors without questions asked, we might then have averted the rupture of the military alliance. We also were not helped when we were essentially forced by Prime Minister Muldoon to bring the destroyer Truxton, to New Zealand in the early 1980s. He in effect ordered us to bring that ship into New Zealand as a show of contempt for the"peaceniks". We brought the ship into Auckland, although we had serious reservations about the wisdom of doing so. Of course, the appearance of that ship brought a major outcry in the country, which became a major catalyst for the political success of the Labor Party and the eventual election of Lange. It is not entirely fair to look in retrospect with 20/20 hindsight, but I do believe that a more attentive policy vis-a-vis New Zealand might have averted the later rupture.

Nevertheless I think our policy was correct; it was not directed towards New Zealand; it was a global policy intended to bolster our security. We would just not "confirm or deny" whether nuclear weapons were aboard a naval vessel. No other country in the world has ever raised the issue the way the New Zealanders did and that gave us very few options.

Lange was not the easiest guy to get along with and furthermore, he had his domestic constituency to worry about. We never trusted him. He was brilliant, but as a lawyer, it was said of him that he would perform at peak efficiency if he could figure out the case in the five minutes it took him to walk down the corridor to the court room. You could not expect Lange to give an issue any sustained and prolonged review. He had "attention deficit disorder."

Another description of him came from Sir Robert Muldoon, the previous Prime Minister and Lange's arch rival. Both were quite plump. When I asked Muldoon what he thought

of Lange, he said that “Lange was a fat boy at the age of three, unloved by his mother, who developed his wit as a defense, but never developed anything to defend.” I think that was a brutal but probably accurate description of the man. Lange did not have any core principles which were sustained over any length of time. He had a squishy love of the poor and the downtrodden, which is commendable, but it was not clear that this was a fundamental principle with him. Many liked him, but very few trusted him, especially those who had to deal with him. I used to go see him quite often; I always felt that diplomats must get out of their offices and talk to the leaders as well as the people to the country to which they were accredited. As time went on and as the nuclear issue receded, I would go to see Lange to chat to him about New Zealand politics and his views about world events. I would then report his views to Washington. Lange and I got along alright; he was always funny and pleasant to me. I wouldn't say we were friends, but we got along and our meetings were pleasant enough. He didn't hold me personally responsible for US policy. In a book he wrote after he ended his Prime Ministership, he did berate my predecessor at some length. He mentioned me in a sentence or two, as Monroe's successor. He did say I was a “harder case”; to this day, I don't know what that meant. Nothing good, I suspect.As a matter of fact, I don't remember being berated by any of the Labor Cabinet officers, except for Mike Moore, who was one of my favorite Cabinet officers. He was the Trade Negotiator and he periodically took me to task for US trade positions and policies. I was never personally attacked by anyone in New Zealand during my tour, even though US-New Zealand relations had seen better days. In fact, the damage to US-New Zealand relations had already taken place by the time I arrived. The last ditch effort I made to try to get the law revised was in vain; so I turned my attention to the future. I made every effort to present the US as a reasonable friend in the hopes that I could calm the waters. I readily admitted that we couldn't change our policy for New Zealand—on disclosure of what our warships were carrying—because of the precedent it would establish—but I emphasized wherever I went that there were many positive aspects to our relationship. I think that this approach, after three years, had some effect on stopping the deterioration of the relations. I don't remember that either I or the US was ever attacked in personal or

venal ways; we were severely criticized for our policies by some ideologues periodically, but it was mostly done in an unoffensive way. Sometimes we would be mentioned for our racial problems; we would be derided occasionally. I think that these criticisms stemmed probably from the New Zealand hurt and anger about the suspension of defense commitments. We did have a couple of tiny demonstrations in front of the Embassy by opponents of our nuclear policy. When I made my first speech, three months after my arrival, to the New Zealand Foreign Policy Association—a preeminent group in Wellington—there were demonstrations which forced me to enter the building through the back door. Some of the demonstrators filtered into the building and began to shout. The moderator told them that if they wanted to participate, they would have to join the association. Some paid the dues and then heckled me from the back row. But that was the exception. I really received very little public condemnation.

I talked about our cooperation in Antarctica and the benefits of trade between our two countries; I emphasized the positives whenever I could. There is always some dissatisfaction about trade. The discussions sometimes get pretty heated; in Australia, some farmers dumped a couple of truckloads of wheat on our Ambassador's lawn; that never happened to me. We did receive some criticism on our dairy support policies, meat quotas and restrictions. But I don't think we were subjected to any more criticism in New Zealand than we were in other countries.

Nor do I think our commercial relationships changed much during my tour. There was some concern, especially in the New Zealand business community, that the nuclear ship issue might have some adverse effect on trade. I think Shultz and others as well as I, tried to make it clear all along that we would not mix economics and politics. We would not invoke sanctions because of the nuclear ship policy. When the New Zealanders finally enacted their restrictive legislation, we did stop dialogue at high political levels on political and security matters and suspended our defense commitments, but we did not suspend high level meetings on trade issues. We took no trade retaliatory measures; there were no non-tariff barrier actions taken, such as anti-dumping suits which might have been

interpreted by some as mere retaliation for the New Zealand's nuclear stand. In fact, trade between New Zealand and the US grew steadily in the three year period I served in Wellington.

As we had for some time, we did impose some restraint (VRA) on meat imports as we did with Australia. But these actions preceded the nuclear issue and therefore could not have been viewed as a retaliatory measure. We also imposed some restraints on dairy imports. None of these trade issues became much of a political issue for us; in part because they were an old story and in part because most of the restraints came as part of negotiations which took place in Geneva where most of the trade issues were being handled. This is not to say that we were not given a stream of complaints by the New Zealand Ministry for Trade or Foreign Ministry or Agriculture Ministry, which we duly reported, but it never was the cause for any political problems. The farmers were undoubtedly unhappy about our policies, but in general, I think the new Zealanders accepted them without rancor. I went on many trips to the countryside and found almost a universal pro-American feeling. Trade with the US was not a particularly large part of the New Zealand economy.

I did not spend as much time as I might have on commercial issues. There was no question that a change of emphasis in our relations was underway as it was elsewhere at the end of the Cold War. That is, we were moving from security concerns to commercial matters. In retrospect, I probably should have been more active in the commercial area, particularly since I was not making any headway on security issues. That is not to say that I neglected the commercial side; I did do a lot of work in that area. We moved the Commercial Office from Wellington to Auckland, which was the commercial center of New Zealand. I kept one New Zealander in the Embassy to handle commercial matters in Wellington, but our principal focus became Auckland. I spent a fair amount of time speaking to Chambers of Commerce, seeing businessmen from both countries, drumming up US-New Zealand trade. I was sure that there was room for trade growth and we did work on that. As I said, the late 1980s was the beginning of the change of US emphasis from security issues to commercial ones around the world. It was also useful for me to

work on commercial issues in New Zealand because that was a positive aspect of our relationship which is what I wanted to emphasize rather than the nuclear ship issue.

As far as I could tell, all the opposition to US policies was domestically grown; I don't think there were any foreign influences at work. There was a certain amount of competition between the Soviet Ambassador and myself; we did appear on TV and other forums sequentially to discuss the Cold War issues of the day. I did not have a head-to-head debate with him because I think that would have been a poor idea. My whole effort in the three years in New Zealand was to calm the waters; I certainly was not interested in stirring up controversies even if they were not directly related to New Zealand. Some New Zealanders may have played up the “Super Power” differences, but it was not in our interest to do so in that country. I got along with the Soviet Ambassadors increasingly well because glasnost was well under way and they were becoming more and more open with me. I enjoyed talking to both Soviet Ambassadors, who spoke excellent English. But as I have said, my main objective was to calm the waters.

While in Wellington I sent three speeches back to the Department which saw fit to publish them in its “Bulletin”. In each I tried to be clear on our positions, without increasing the heat of the debate. The three speeches showed the progression in our relations.

While I was Ambassador, there were a number of attempts made in Washington to be “tougher” on the New Zealanders than I thought warranted. There may well have been some people who wanted to invoke economic sanctions, for example, but Shultz took that issue off the table almost from the beginning of our controversy with the New Zealanders. But there was an effort made to close our post in Auckland. That got me into a serious disagreement with Washington. I think that these ideas came from the Director of the Office for Australia-New Zealand Affairs, John Glassman, probably supported by Jim Lilley, the EA Deputy Assistant Secretary.

One day, I received a questionnaire about closing the Consulate General in Auckland. I almost immediately responded with a strong negative answer. The post had existed for 130 years, I said, it was a busy place for both commercial and consular work. To close the post would only mean moving all the functions to Wellington because they could not be eliminated. We would be far more inconvenienced ourselves than would be the New Zealanders. In any case, I thought that it would be a poor political decision because it would be perceived as an anti new Zealand act, regardless how we might paint it. It would just give the Labor Party extremists further fuel for their fire; we would be painted as a “big bully” without gaining any benefit.

Then came another questionnaire, which seemed rather odd to me. It was more detailed than the first one. We filled it out and submitted it again indicating our strong opposition to the closing of the post. I am not sure what happened next, but I do remember that on one of my trips back to Washington for consultations, I was sitting in Mike Armacost's office —he was then the Under Secretary for Political Affairs. In the middle of our conversation about New Zealand matters, he asked me whether I really wanted to close Auckland. I was stunned. My reply was not only “No”, but “Hell, no!” I told Mike that I had made it as clear as I could in my messages that I strongly objected to the proposal. Mike didn't say anything for a few moments and then said that he had not understood that that was my position. The Director for Australia-New Zealand affairs—Glassman—was in the meeting and said absolutely nothing. I never discussed that exchange with him subsequently. I should have. But is was clear to me that my position had been perverted by the EA Bureau in some report to Armacost. I don't know how else Mike would have gotten the idea that I wanted to close Auckland. As far as I know, the post closing idea did not stem from budgetary pressures; those were the days when the Department could still operate at a relatively effective level. So I assume that the rationale for closing Auckland was strictly political—retribution for a New Zealand policy which we found abhorrent. In the final analysis, the post was not closed, which was obviously the sensible decision.

But I must say that this episode made me more leery than ever of the support I was receiving from Glassman. I think he was a supporter, if not instigator, of a very hard line policy toward New Zealand. My view was that we had pushed New Zealand as hard as seemed profitable; I saw no reason to continue the pounding. It wasn't going to change the New Zealand position on nuclear warships. We weren't going to change ours—and rightly so—but I thought the time had come to agree to disagree and let it go at that. No further recriminations were in order, nor would they have accomplished anything positive. I always had the feeling that Glassman wanted to punish the New Zealanders; that seemed to me to be a misguided policy. Any negative action we might take would only have played into the hands of the Labor Party's left wing which would have used any excuse to berate the United States as the “big bully.” The left did berate us whenever it could, but without any major US action, its position did not resonate through the country.

Otherwise, I think I received good backstopping from Washington. After having been in Wellington for a few months and after the New Zealanders passed the legislation that we wanted stopped or amended, I lobbied Washington to develop a public relations campaign. I wanted as many top level Americans as could be found. I wanted them to speak in New Zealand about US policies towards East Asia. People who had sufficient credibility to explain our actions and views. For example, Harry Harding—an outstanding China scholar—came out, Jonathan Pollard from Rand came. We tried to get American participants to foreign policy conferences held in New Zealand. It was a stepped up effort that I really pushed. The Department supported us in this effort.

We did have one unfortunate development, however, as part of this effort. I wanted an authoritative American to come to explain our policy about reducing nuclear weapons around the world, which the Reagan administration had pushed publicly. I wanted to combat the propaganda that some New Zealanders were spreading to the effect that we were the monster that was driving the nuclear arms race. I thought that some education about our position and our actions was in order. We finally managed to get the head of

ACDA to agree to come. But at the last minute, we got a message indicating that he had cancelled the trip. I was dismayed. I found out later that the reason for the cancellation was because during one of the Secretary's staff meetings, our ACDA Chief had mentioned that he was planning to go to New Zealand and Australia and he would be discussing our efforts on arms limitations in Auckland. The Secretary immediately told him to cancel his stop in Auckland; he didn't want anyone at that level to go to New Zealand to discuss nuclear weapons issues. It was his policy that senior officers of the US government were not to talk about nuclear and security issues in New Zealand. That view was consistent with Shultz' long held policy that we would not conduct any kind of public dialogue on security issues with New Zealand by anyone above the assistant secretary level. But I think it was a self defeating decision.

Most of the UN issues were handled in New York. The Embassy may have been engaged on a couple of occasions, but New York was the focal points for discussions of UN issues.

I would not wish to leave the impression that we in the Embassy were at odds with Washington. I have mentioned the couple of occasions when we might have worked at cross purposes, but those were rare instances. The policy that I was pursuing in Wellington had been pretty well outlined to me and others by Shultz; so there really wasn't any debate about our strategy in New Zealand. Whenever I returned for consultations, once or twice each year, I would see Armacost. I think that all substantial issues, of which there were very few, reached at least Armacost. We never had any differences; we had known each other for many years. So I cannot complain about the support I received from the Department; the Bureau accommodated my request as best they could. My only reservation, as I have already mentioned, was with Glassman.

I also think that New Zealand was not very high on either the Assistant Secretary's priority list nor the Under Secretary's. Once the ship issue was resolved, no top level people spent time on the subject. That was alright with me because I really didn't have any major issues on my plate that needed their attention; my actions were basically ministerial, taken to

implement a policy that was well established. My major function was simply to explain to the New Zealanders our positions, and I spoke frequently to audiences throughout the country. I put the best possible spin on our position on nuclear warships; it was important that we not be seen as a hard-nose bully who didn't really care about anyone else except ourselves.

The press was relatively objective. They of course had their differences on the nuclear ship issue. The “Evening Post” in Wellington was pro-American; it had a very conservative publisher and editor with whom I got along well. “The Dominion” was somewhat less pro-American, but not provocative. The Auckland “Herald” was pro-American; the Christchurch “Press” which was a very good paper, was reasonably balanced. No newspaper was in the pockets of either of the parties or any factions thereof. I spent as much time as I could with the media because that was a good conduit for our message. I was interviewed many times; I appeared on TV several times; I appeared on radio shows. One time, I went to a small town and appeared on the local radio show. One elderly lady called in and said: “What a nice man Ambassador Cleveland is.” That made my day! I was very pleased with that reaction because it showed that we could project an image of a decent country and people. My line was always that I understood the New Zealanders' problem with nuclear warships and all I asked in return that they recognize that the US also had a problem. As I said, I spoke as often as I could; I had no shortage of invitations for which I was very thankful.

Whenever I went into the countryside away from the major cities, where I knew we had some sympathy because farmers are innately conservative and those people were chafing under the economic reforms instituted by the government—it had taken away all the agricultural subsidies. I would often start my speeches with the line; “Friends, I want you to know that I have some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that I am from the government and I am here to help you.” (groans and hisses). “The good news is that I am not from your government.” (loud cheers). I didn't always use that line because it obviously ran some risk of displeasing the Labor government, even though Lange had a

good sense of humor, he did not like humor at his own expense. But I enjoyed using that line whenever I could.

I should make it clear that I did not always try to be a nice guy. On the Wellington waterfront, there was a small monument donated by the 2nd Marine Division, which had come ashore during WW II between its engagements on Guadalcanal and Tarawa—two very bloody battles. The division stayed in Wellington for some length of time and left this monument which said: “From the 2nd Marine Division: We will always be here when you need us.” The monument got knocked down one day by a truck—accidentally, I believe. It was rebuilt through donations from the 2nd Marine Division veterans. We then planned a ceremony which would be attended by a representative group from the Division. It was all set for a Saturday morning. As I got into my car to drive to the ceremony, I heard the following on the radio: “The Agricultural Minister, Colin Moyle, said today on his return from Tehran that he didn't understand why there was such a fuss about Iran. He found that country to be grand and as far as he could see, was a democracy.” That blew my mind. At the monument, I found about thirty US Second Division veterans and their wives, plus some senior New Zealand military officers. So in my remarks at the rededication ceremony, I included a few unkind words about that radio report. I deplored the thought that any senior representative of a democratic government would go to Iran and declare it a democracy. I found that unbelievable and offensive. I said I thought it was a very sad day for true democracy. My comments got wide and immediate dissemination through the media. I was delighted when Lange later chewed Moyle out publically. It was obviously unacceptable for any member of the government to make such remarks in light of the facts known to the whole world.

I mentioned Antarctica earlier. By treaty, we had cooperative arrangements with many countries that had some interest in that area of the world. Many countries had made territorial claims on Antarctica, but without surrendering the rights we claimed, we agreed not to pursue them. All the signatories agreed to free passage on Antarctica to all peaceful

traffic. The US itself has never claimed any specific part of Antarctica, although we have at times suggested that we could claim the whole area.

We also had specific agreements with New Zealand because we used Christchurch as the take off point for our planes that were resupplying our base in Antarctica—McMurdo. We had a small resupply base in Christchurch. Those arrangements had worked well for many years and continued while I was in new Zealand. While planes carrying nuclear weapons were theoretically not allowed to land in New Zealand without the PM's decision as to whether they carried Nukes, there was never any prohibition on our flights for Antarctica; it was in every one's interest to have that operation continue. Lange made it very clear that he was not going to raise any questions about our air traffic in Christchurch. He said that everyone knew that neither the US or anyone else would put nuclear weapons in the “veggies”; i.e. the food stuff and scientific material we were shipping to Antarctica. As far as he was concerned, that was the end of any potential problems about using Christchurch as our resupply point. So we continued to have full cooperation with the New Zealanders, sharing planes and other operations. Their base was near ours in Antarctica, so that there was a synergy which made cooperation very sensible.

In short, our Antarctica arrangement was always a good one and continued without problems—until one day when John Lehman, the Secretary of the Navy arrived. He was a very conservative man, who does not stand very high in my esteem—didn't then and doesn't now. Lehman came loaded for bear. There had been some suggestions made in the past to move our antarctica supply base from Christchurch to Tasmania. The Governor of Tasmania was very anxious to have that happen because the Australians already had their supply base in Tasmania and he thought it would be a dandy idea to have the Americans collocated there. But I didn't think it was a very practical idea; in any case, we had had this long standing arrangement with New Zealand that had worked well for many years and I was strongly opposed to any such move.

Sometime before the Lehman visit, Secretary Shultz had ruled out any move of the re-supply base out of Christchurch; he did not want Antarctica—a scientific endeavor—tied to a political issue like the nuclear warship visit one. But Lehman came; he was determined that he would find some way to bypass the Secretary of State and move the base. He wanted to punish the New Zealanders for their position on “his” Navy's port visits.

I flew to Christchurch to have breakfast with him. New Zealand's Secretary of Defense Dennis McLean also came and we used his plane to fly to the South island. I was told later that, after breakfast, Lehman sent a message back to Washington reporting that he had had breakfast with McLean and Cleveland; he said that the Secretary of Defense was easier to get along with than the American Ambassador, which was probably true. I told Lehman loud and clear that I was strongly opposed to moving the supply base out of New Zealand because it was not consistent with our foreign policy and the explicit directions of the Secretary of State. Lehman left Christchurch without saying anything about the re-supply base, went to Antarctica and returned still saying nothing about the re-supply base. Then he went on to Australia and Tasmania, where he had a meeting with the Governor. After that session, he announced that the US would consider moving the Christchurch operation to Tasmania. After my breakfast with Lehman, I had issued special orders to the staff to alert me to anything that he might say on his trip. So, within five minutes of Lehman's statement, I was called and immediately issued a press statement which flatly contradicted Lehman's comments—that had been drafted ahead of time as a contingency item. We said that the Secretary of the Navy does not make foreign policy; that is the responsibility of the Secretary of State who had already given assurances that the Christchurch base would not be moved. Fortunately, this internal US squabble only got page 6 coverage, saying that “US Ambassador refutes comments by US Secretary of the Navy.” Fortunately it did not draw much attention in New Zealand and that was the last we ever heard of moving the Christchurch base. By giving it our immediate response, the story became a non-story, thereby denying the left a new issue to batter the US. That

enabled us to move on the path we had set: get along with New Zealand and cool down the rhetoric that our differences on nuclear warship visits had created.

I did visit Antarctica myself. The US Ambassador to New Zealand had some special responsibilities for that area, although it was practically no work load whatsoever. I was designated to sign on behalf of the US a protocol to the Antarctica Treaty, that placed some tough environmental restrictions on operations in Antarctica. Most of the other countries did not sign it; so that the protocol was never promulgated.

In general, I found a competent American staff in New Zealand. A post like Wellington does not attract the cream of the crop, but I was satisfied with my staff. The DCM when I arrived—Dick Teare—was a good officer; he was replaced by Al LaPorta, who was was an exceptional manager and I felt very comfortable having him run the Embassy on a day-to-day basis leaving me time to do the public relations business and the high level contacts. In between those two, I had a DCM for a short period of time—John Penfold. He was an economic officer; I don't think he was very happy in Wellington, and he left after about a year to go to Honduras. Most of the people from the other agencies were also quite satisfactory. There were some minor problems, but they were very minor. We didn't have any “stars”, but I think the staff was quite good. I was very pleased when we were inspected—I think this was 1988. As a result, I got a letter from the Secretary saying that Wellington was one of the five best posts of one hundred or so that had been inspected that year. I already felt good because the inspectors before leaving for their next post had told me informally that morale in New Zealand was among the best they had ever seen. I credit that to several factors: 1) I was the first professional Ambassador in many years and I spent a lot of time walking around the Chancery talking to both American and local employees. I think that was well received; 2) I used to go out with some of the local employees to sporting events; that was also appreciated; and 3) the substantive and rhetorical approach we took was effective.

I should comment a little about New Zealanders' views of the world. They are simultaneously global and provincial. New Zealand is a small country located at the edge of the map. Just that situation alone explains why they viewed the world differently than we did. An Australian historian once wrote about the “tyranny of distance.” That meant that in the beginning, because they were distant, Australia and New Zealand clung to England —the motherland. Neither country developed its national identity until after WW II, when it became clear that England could no longer protect the “colonies.” Both countries tried to turn to the US but we were not psychologically inclined to play the “mother protector” role that England had. So New Zealand was left to its own devices, far away from the rest of the world. It then developed its own sense of nationalism, which became the foundation for its independent policy on nuclear weapons. New Zealand also wanted to be recognized at the same time as an important global player. This posed a real dilemma for New Zealand. It wanted to be important but it was “off the map.” One of their policy decisions which tried to accommodate their situation was the “nuclear free zone” concept they promoted. More broadly, New Zealand took a highly responsible global approach. It sends more troops to support UN peace keeping operations than almost any other country. It has observers as part of the Observer Force in the Sinai. It sent troops to Somalia, Bosnia and many other places where peacekeeping was required. So along with their provincial “nationalism,” New Zealanders have a sense of global responsibility, rooted in a real sense of where they are geographically. They will sacrifice for the maintenance of peace throughout the world, in part on the assumption that if they need help at some time, the world will repay them. I think that their policy on nuclear warships was an exception to their general willingness to participate positively in world affairs.

Q: Then in 1989 you were assigned to Malaysia as our Ambassador. How did that come about?

CLEVELAND: I think I lucked out as in some ways I had with my Wellington assignment. One day, Larry Eagleburger called me in Wellington to tell me that the administration had

selected a woman—a real estate person—from the State of Washington to succeed me as Ambassador to New Zealand. He told me not to worry however, because the Department's new policy was to find good assignments for any career Ambassadors who had been replaced by a political appointee. In fact, he mentioned that Malaysia might be available and asked me whether I would be interested. I agreed and that is how I ended up in Kuala Lumpur. That new policy I think was very helpful to me.

The confirmation process took a little longer this time. I left Wellington towards the end of April 1989 and I didn't get to Kuala Lumpur until October. Most of the time was taken up with the clearance process and some briefings. The confirmation hearings went smoothly and the Senate approval process was accomplished expeditiously.

I had learned something about Malaysia when I served in Indonesia. I had visited the country on a couple of occasions. So I had some familiarity with the Indonesian-Malay culture in general. But that was the extent of my knowledge. In fact, Malaysia was quite different from Indonesia.

In Malaysia, there is a convergence of three cultures: Malay, Chinese and Indian. The Chinese population in Malaysia is quite substantial whereas it was only 5% in Indonesia. As a consequence, the Malays, in contrast to the Indonesians, are less secure and feel more threatened by the Chinese. The Chinese in Malaysia are intelligent, traditionally worked harder than the Malay and therefore did better in school and in business. That was bound to effect the Malay view of the Chinese.

In 1969 there were major communal riots. In response to this perceived threat of Chinese domination, the Malay had promulgated the largest affirmative action program in the world. They had set up a system which made sure that Malays would get their share—if not more—of the opportunities in academia, government, the military and some of the financial centers—the key control spots. The Chinese were left to take over the business community. The affirmative action had worked extremely well over the years, without

increasing the tension between the Malay and Chinese communities. The Chinese, despite their losses in some key segments of society, were left with enough of the “pie” to satisfy them. The success of the affirmative action program was undoubtedly due to a rapidly expanding economy, led by trade. As long as the “economic pie” was ever expanding, it could accommodate the needs of the racial communities, even with their growing populations. So the government could afford to discriminate against the Chinese because everybody's economic well-being was improving. It was always said that if the economy were to stagnate or, even worse, to deteriorate, then the tension between the communities would undoubtedly rise again.

The Indians were only 9% of the population. They were probably, as a whole, at the bottom of society. Some Indians had some very highly respected professional positions—lawyers, doctors, etc. But on the other hand, many of them were rubber tappers and poor. Since the Indian portion of the population was relatively small, they did not play a major role in Malaysian society. It was the Malay-Chinese schism that drove politics in Malaysia. In practice, the multi-racial society worked reasonably well because of the economic growth and the affirmative action program promulgated by the government. I think it is still working well.

When I went to Malaysia, our relationship with that country was reasonably good. The trade relations were good. The Malaysian had fewer trade restrictions—tariff and non-tariff barriers—than almost any country in the Far East. We only had a few complaints abut import restrictions—chocolate, chickens and some other agricultural products. But by and large, we were satisfied with Malaysian trade policies. In addition, Malaysia was quite open to foreign investment—quite different than Korea, for example, which was highly restrictive on foreign investment. Malaysians welcomed our technology and as a result became the third largest exporter in the world of computer chips. American firms like Intel drove this growth when they decided to build plants in Malaysia. Although the chips were designed in

the US, they were produced in Malaysia. So our economic relations were quite satisfactory and my marching orders were to keep them so.

The biggest US investor was EXXON—known as ESSO in Malaysia. It had very large oil fields that it was exploiting. ESSO also found major gas reserves which they were bringing up. There were other US investments—e.g. Mattel—in Malaysia. It became obvious to me after a few months in Kuala Lumpur that the trade and investment aspects of the Malaysia-US relations was really the major area to work on; the political side, which I will discuss later, was just not fertile ground to plow. I began by vowing not to become a “salesman”, as the Scandinavian ambassadors were for their fishing and timber products. “That was not my bag,” I said. It didn't take me long however before I decided that I indeed would become a “salesman” for American products. I had in the past spent 66%-70% of my time on political and security issues—as I had done in Korea. That changed dramatically in Malaysia; in fact, I spent two-thirds of my time on commercial matters—promoting US commercial interests in Malaysia. The Cold War had passed. It was clear that our diplomatic focus around the world would have to adjust to that fact and in Southeast Asia, it was the economic/commercial interests that had to become the priority focus of my attention. Of course, there were always political/security issues, but they were no longer the time consumers that they had been. I should say that this change of emphasis was all at my initiative; Washington hadn't caught up with the new environment in which its Ambassadors in Southeast Asia were operating. I rewrote our “Goals and Objectives” statement which was the fundamental operating guideline for my Country Team. We used to have two staff meetings each week on a variety of subjects; I changed one to focus entirely on commercial issues. I personally spent more and more time with the Economic and Commercial Counselors—to the chagrin of the Political Section. As time went on, I asked our political analysts to write more and more about the connections between Malaysian government and business, including for example the fact that the ruling party's leadership was part of interlocking directorships that ran many business enterprises. We

tried to examine how Malaysian business was run, how it worked, and how it related to the political leadership.

So we shifted the focus of the Embassy's work. I spent a lot of time with American businessman. I saw every businessman who came to Kuala Lumpur who wanted to see me. I spent a lot of time with the ABC (the American Business Community—now known as the American Chamber of Commerce). When my tour ended, the ABC gave me a commemorative plaque for my efforts on behalf of American business in Malaysia as Honorary Chairman of the ABC board. It was clear that the Embassy had dramatically changed from a time honored multi-purpose organization into one which gave the highest priority to commercial work. We pushed all the trade issues as much as we could. As I said, there weren't many barriers but we pushed to eliminate the few that were standing. We worked assiduously on that—every day in every way.

One day I was in Singapore visiting Bob Orr, our Ambassador there. He had been the Governor of Indiana, after a career in business. I thought he was a jewel. We were having breakfast on the back porch of his residence. I said: “Bob, we are wasting our time just sitting out here. We should be traveling back in the US, pushing American business to come and invest here.” It was a thought that had just occurred to me on the spur of the moment. But Bob picked up on it immediately and said it was a great idea. He said he was going back to Washington in a few days and he promised to raise the suggestion there. Orr did just that and got Deputy Secretary Eagleburger's support, as well as Under Secretary Bob Zellick's. The EA Bureau said it thought it was a great idea, but didn't come through with any money or support. I think the Deputy Secretary and the Under Secretary did genuinely support the idea, but the Bureau just gave it lip service. But I did get a message from Bob Driscoll, the chairman of the ASEAN Business Council in Washington. He wanted to know what his organization could do to make such a trip through the US successful.

The first Ambassadorial group that was supposed to beat the US business bushes consisted of Orr, John Monjo—from Indonesia—and myself. Monjo wanted a larger group, however, so we expanded it to include all the US Ambassadors to the ASEAN countries, and included our Charge' in Brunei. In the Spring of 1992, we took our commercial counselors and some representatives of relevant Washington agencies (EX-IM, OPIC, etc) and hit the US road. We visited seven cities. We started in Portland where we had 350 businessmen attend our conference. Chuck Knight, the Chairman of NIKE, was instrumental in making the Portland conference a success. In fact, NIKE financed the whole conference—at its college campus south of Portland. Driscoll traveled with us; he introduced us. Then we each gave short presentations. In the afternoon, the businessmen came to talk to the Ambassadors from the countries in which they were interested. After Portland we went to Chicago, Atlanta, Houston, Detroit and several other cities in Michigan, and then Washington and New York. It was a great success. CNN gave us some time on its “Moneyline' show with Fred Dobbs. I think this tour did make a difference.

When we got to Washington, we were already pretty well known. So when we met with the bureaucracy there, our meeting was attended by 150 senior officials—deputy assistant secretaries and up. That gave us an opportunity to report on what we had found across the country, what the problems and issues were and what the possible solutions were.

Our message across the US was that Southeast Asia was the fastest growing part of the globe. The American business community had for too long neglected this growing potential market; it had been too slow and too loath to go to places like East Asia. The Japanese and other Asians were entering the American market. If the trade imbalances were not rectified soon through some aggressive American business activity in Southeast Asia we would lose a golden opportunity that might never be recoverable. It was clear that the Japanese, for example, would be competitive in the US and in East Asia, whereas the Americans would only be competitive in the US. Under such circumstances, we would

lose. Our argument might have been somewhat overstated, but there was considerable truth to it. I think we did bring that message home and it did begin to sink in.

There was another serendipitous plus. We had a USIA man with us and he wrote stories about our sales pitch. The results were evident; I got 25 favorable press stories in the Malaysian press in the course of the two weeks I was on the road. The USIA man just kept writing and the media in Southeast Asia just picked them up and ran them—verbatim. The stories didn't vary very much one from the other, but the Malaysian press ran them. This was an entirely new effort; no American Ambassadors had ever done what we were doing. We got more press attention on this commercial effort than we had ever had before on any issue. They really gave us a lot of coverage and all favorable. They were mystified that a group of American Ambassadors would be in the United States pushing programs that benefitted the Southeast Asia countries. In fact, this particular tour gave rise to subsequent traveling “shows” put on by the ASEAN Ambassadors in Washington, also sponsored by the US-ASEAN Business Council. I have to give great credit to Driscoll not only for the support he gave our group, but his subsequent efforts as well. He managed to get free air fares for us, free rooms at hotels, dinners sponsored by major corporations, etc. Flour in Houston took us around in helicopters and huge Cadillac limousines. Some of the support we got was incredible. It was a great success and that program continues to the day.

This is not to say that the day after I returned to Kuala Lumpur I was swamped with new American businessmen wanting to seek opportunities in Malaysia. But we did see some evidence of success, although a casual relationship is always hard to establish in a situation such as this. But I have no question that our trip, coming at a propitious moment, did have an impact on American attitudes about doing business in Southeast Asia. It was my sense, and that of my colleagues, that the Japanese were beating our pants off in Southeast Asia because our business community had not made an effort. At the same time, the trade imbalance issue was getting attention in the US; the importance of trade to our economic well being was being increasingly recognized. President Bush went to Singapore and Japan pushing car sales at that time—he did well in one place and

not so well in the other. But by 1992, the idea of a President going out to be a salesman for US products was no longer met with raised eyebrows; the country was beginning to understand the importance of trade and exports. So our trip was well timed. It may also have been one of the first efforts by the US diplomatic corps to see that US interest lay in the commercial side and that the Foreign Service would have to adapt to that.I want to emphasize the “beginning” aspect of the Department's interest in commercial work. There was no question that the leadership understood what was going on. The EA Bureau was a little slow on the uptake. But I do believe that the EA Bureau also eventually got the message. When we came to Washington, we spent most of our time with Eagleburger and Zellick. I think Eagleburger was genuinely impressed; he was amazed by the reception we had gotten and the interest we had attracted. Zellick was also very supportive.

I think it is fair to say—and my later assignment confirmed my views—that the Department of State, as an institution, has never been interested in commercial work. It is true that in the more recent past, the Department has tried to be more involved in commercial work. On the other hands, I think it has been the custom and not the exception to find Embassies rather than the Department working hard on commercial issues. Many are doing a very effective work; they are on top of issues and are helping in pushing US business trying to win contracts for US companies. Many of these Embassies are getting increasingly more effective support from the country desks in Washington. I am sure that more and more Ambassadors found that with the end of the Cold War, the US could best influence events in their countries through economic/commercial channels. Improvements in US commercial activities were the main challenge left for US Ambassadors and their staffs. In addition, commercial work in the field is kind of fun. You can go see a cabinet minister and maybe come away with a $100 million contract. That is very satisfying. But I must note that the Department itself has had a more difficult time changing its focus. It is still wedded to political and politico/military issues with which it feels more comfortable, but I think over the years, it has shown some shift in its perceptions of the importance of various bilateral issues.

On the military side while I was in Malaysia, there was an ongoing negotiation on a “Status of Forces” agreement. There had been an increasing relationship between the military of both countries. It was never a major program, but it was of some important to both sides. We never had many US military personnel in country at any one time. But we used to hold joint exercises and bring small groups of special forces into the country. We brought naval forces into Lumut and Penang harbors. We also considered deploying some aircraft on a temporary basis. So our presence was never large, but we would on occasions have some military in country on a temporary basis. We did have one military group permanently stationed in Malaysia—probably a dozen officers and families. It was responsible for inspection of US military aircraft being repaired AIROD—a Malaysian government repair facility. Some of our C-130s were sent there for maintenance and repair.

The most interesting aspect of the SOFA negotiations was fulfilling our objective of protecting our military from the draconian anti-drug laws that were in effect in Malaysia and Singapore. We were negotiating SOFAs with both states simultaneously. Our concern was that both countries made minimal possession of any drugs a major crime which had the death penalty as a possible punishment. We were worried more about the children of our military personnel than we were of the uniformed personnel themselves. Kids have been known to exercise very poor judgement, even in schools and we were anxious to protect against the unacceptable punishments that the Malaysian or Singaporean authorities might mete out under their laws. We finally developed language which gave us an escape and made it clear that the Malaysian would treat any American military and his family in accordance with “the mutual interest” of the two sides or words to that effect. The Singapore government would not agree to such a clause and negotiated a much more restrictive SOFA. The Malaysians were not happy when they found out that they had not been accorded the same jurisdiction as had Singapore. It never became a significant issue, but there were some tense moments in that SOFA negotiation. Fortunately, we never had the need to test the language of the Malaysian SOFA.

The political relationship between the US and Malaysia was not as good as the economic or military ones. In my view, this was due primarily to the fact that Prime Minister Mahathir had not been invited to the White House by President Bush and he then reacted in a querulous, petty fashion. Reagan had extended such an invitation. But Mahathir had only briefly met with Bush and he then reacted in a querulous, petty fashion.during a Boston University graduation ceremony, when his son was graduating and Bush had given the commencement address. He then had a twenty minute meeting with the President in “the locker room” as Mahathir described it. Bush had to rush off to entertain Mitterrand. That left a bad taste in Mahathir's mouth. So he was upset by his perception of the way Bush was treating him. On several occasions we pointed out to Washington what was bugging Mahathir. Of course, there is always great competition among the leaders of all countries to receive an invitation to the White House. Our President just doesn't have enough time for all of them. In addition, Mahathir was not highly regarded in Washington, particularly in light of his anti-Western statements. He took direct aim at Australians. He also said some things about the US which were not well received in Washington.

In addition, Secretary of State James Baker did not have a very high regard for Mahathir. The question of the EAEG (East Asian Economic Group which later became the East Asian Economic Caucus) arose. Mahathir thought that APEC needed a counterbalance. APEC was an organization which the US had nourished and supported for many years. Mahathir wanted an organization for Asian countries only. That was unwelcome to us because we were afraid that the second organization would divide the Asia-Pacific area into separate blocks, thereby weakening the Pan Pacific structure we were trying to establish. It would have meant that the Asians would be in one block and the rest of the Pacific nations in another.

While I agreed on that point, my view was quite different than that espoused by the Department on how we should proceed. We did agree that the Malaysian proposal was a bad one; so we had no disagreement with Washington on the objectives. What we in the

Embassy in Kuala Lumpur did disagree on were the tactics on EAEG. We did not believe that a frontal attack was the best approach. If we were to openly oppose the idea, it would force the proud Mahathir to dig in his heels and defend his idea vigorously. It was the advice of other Asian countries that the US not oppose the idea outright. Low key, indirect opposition was a better approach, we wrote. The Department at first just told us politely that it was not convinced by our rationale and asked that we not comment in any way on the Mahathir idea.

We then suggested in a message that the EAEG be turned into a caucus as a part of APEC. It seemed logical that the Asians would meet separately, but as part of an overall Asian Pacific (APEC) forum. That got a rapid and very forceful negative response from Washington. It was suggested that I just shut up about this issue.Then, unbeknown to me, Dick Solomon—probably at the request of Bob Zellick or the Secretary—asked Mike Armacost, our Ambassador in Tokyo, to go to an Asian Society meeting in Bali and speak against EAEG. There, Mahathir gave a blistering anti-American speech showing his irritation with our negative position on his idea—the EAEG. That was a major error on the Prime Minister's part. He alienated the US businessmen in the audience, but more important he alienated President Suharto. He knew that Suharto of Indonesia—the host country—did not favor EAEG, nor was he in favor of alienating the US. In fact, Suharto was upset that Mahathir would use a venue in his country to support an idea he opposed and to his “friend”—the US. Furthermore, both Suharto and Mahathir were competing for the mantle as spokesman for Southeast Asia which had been worn by Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore. Naturally, Suharto was angry about the speech. The next day, Armacost gave a speech in which he outright rejected the concept of an EAEG. I understand that all the Asian countries just shook their heads at this debate. The Japanese Ambassador—a brilliant man—in Kuala Lumpur had told me repeatedly that the US should just stay out of the EAEG debate and leave it to the Asians themselves; they would kill the idea softly. One day the Ambassador said to me: “Leave EAEG alone. We Asians will lead it into an honorable cul-de-sac.” I think that was a great line, but we nevertheless chose to oppose

EAEG openly and forcefully, thereby embarrassing and angering Mahathir. Fortunately, Indonesia and Japan shared our basic opposition to EAEG; neither country wanted to alienate its strongest ally and friend. They managed to quietly downplay EAEG.

After making this speech, Mike Armacost called me from Tokyo and apologized. He told me that he had given it under instructions. I appreciated the call. But by that time, the damage was done and I had to live with this US tactic. I think that the Asians would have sidetracked the idea without us, possibly more quickly and with less anger had we not intervened. In any case, EAEG did not endear Mahathir to Baker who had reservations about the Malaysian Prime Minister for other reasons as well. But the Bali conference and its aftermath certainly killed any chance of Mahathir being invited to the White House and with that went any hope of our having much influence in Malaysia on political issues. In fact, it became US policy to disregard Mahathir as much as possible and to oppose him openly whenever the opportunity arose. My advice was different; I thought that had we invited Mahathir to Washington and played to his ego a little, that we could have at least neutralized him if not actually won him over. I think that was the best course, but the administration refused to do that. The Clinton administration, on the other hand, did invite Mahathir to lunch and now has a solid friend in Southeast Asia. The Malaysians showed their gratitude by buying F-18s for a sizeable amount of money.

It was not all our fault. Mahathir had a very prickly personality to go along with his perceived neglect. He was a difficult character to get along with. He complained a lot publically and I thought took every conceivable occasion to make his unhappiness known. Baker had come to Kuala Lumpur in 1991 for a APEC Ministerial meeting. He paid a courtesy call on Mahathir. I heard that he later told some people in Tokyo that he felt that he had been insulted by Mahathir because the Prime Minister had received him wearing a bush jacket—that was not an appropriate attire. I think Baker's views are clearly shown in his book; he was not very kind to Mahathir in that.

One real insult showing how bad Mahathir could be was his refusal to take a phone call from the President when Bush visited Singapore in the Spring of 1992. Bush had asked me about Mahathir and concluded from my comments that Mahathir was a “proud man.” I agreed. Bush then tried to appease Mahathir by telephoning him from his plane. When Mahathir refused to talk, the Americans were dumbfounded. I took some pleasure in saying to a chagrined Foreign Ministry official that: “Even Saddam Hussein would take a call from the President of the United States.”

I only had one private meeting with Mahathir during my tour; otherwise he would not see me. That meeting didn't take place until I had been in Kuala Lumpur for several months. I finally got in to see him because I was about to return to the US for consultations and I thought that I should at least be able to report that I had seen the Prime Minister privately. The meeting was a dud; he just sat there and said virtually nothing. I would ask questions and get monosyllabic answers. I thought that Mahathir acted rather immaturely. He was just mad because his personal vanity had been wounded.

I may have exacerbated the problem myself. I tried to be helpful at one time early on in my tour, when we were restricting financial flows around the world of Iraqi funds. I sent letters to the six or seven pertinent Cabinet ministers of Malaysia, informing them of our action, asking some questions about the status of the funds and offering my assistance if they needed it. The Malaysians somehow interpreted this as an effort on my part to undermine their government. I think they found it inappropriate for me to be in contact with ministries other than the Foreign Ministry on this subject, although on many other matters I dealt directly with the pertinent minister; indeed I was expected to do so. In this case however, they wished that I had sent only one letter to the Foreign Minister who then would have contacted his Cabinet colleagues. I guess, in an effort to be efficient, I took the wrong course; in retrospect it would obviously have been better for me to write only to the Foreign Minister. I am still not sure why they took such umbrage at this, but they did. My letters came up in a Cabinet meeting, I was told, and then I was called in by the Director for

American Affairs at the Foreign Ministry to be lectured about my “serious error in protocol.” But that was the one exception to what was otherwise a professional relationship with the Malaysian bureaucracy.

In 1991, when Iraq invaded Kuwait, Baker went to visit many of the countries that had Security Council membership that year. He couldn't squeeze Malaysia in on his trip but wanted to see the Foreign Minister Hassan in Los Angeles. The Foreign Minister refused to go to LA to see Baker. So President Bush called Mahathir when the latter was in Tokyo. That call was enough to get the Foreign Minister to go to LA to see Baker. There were four countries that were not supporting our position in the Security Council; Malaysia was one of them. When the vote came up, Cuba and Yemen voted against us, but Malaysia was persuaded and voted with us after Bush's call, the Baker-Hassan meeting and some excellent work by Tom Pickering, our Ambassador to the UN. The Embassy was also involved, but primarily as a supporting player to the actions of others.

The UN vote was a tough decision for Mahathir; he had a lot of opposition among radical Muslims. In fact, there was a lot of support for Iraq as the Gulf War developed. We had the only real riots in front of the Embassy in my time—a couple of hundred people who were hopping mad. These were Muslim radicals showing their support for Saddam Hussein and their opposition to our bombing of their “brothers.” So Mahathir had his domestic problems. The Chancery was given some very heavy protection by the Malaysians because we were concerned that some real “bomb throwers” might have infiltrated from outside Malaysia. It was the only time in my career I felt personally threatened. Happily, Carter was in the US. We took a lot of security precautions like barricades in front of doors, etc. Fortunately, no one was hurt and the Gulf War came to an end rather rapidly.

As for other threats, there had been a Communist threat in Malaysia, but by the time I got there, that had pretty well evaporated. There were a few communist terrorists in the jungles, but they were not a threat except perhaps to themselves and no one was really concerned.

I got a good reception in Kuala Lumpur after my trade mission trip through the US. The Trade Minister seemed a little mystified by what I had done; no American Ambassador —nor any other Ambassador for that matter—had ever traveled through his own country publicizing economic opportunities in his host country with such fanfare. These opportunities were in the interest of both Malaysia and the US. Our approach was new and I think the Malaysians were taken by surprise. As I mentioned earlier, our road show did get wide attention in the Malaysian press which I think further increased the government's curiosity. Given Mahathir's personality and view about the US, it was probably hard for any Cabinet officer to be outright pleased by my efforts, but I am sure they did not go unnoticed. Despite my support for increased Malaysian economic growth, Mahathir's attitude toward the US never improved in my time. He never acknowledged that we had tried to help Malaysia.

As I said, Mahathir's attitude toward the US never changed until the Clinton administration took office and then (my guess is) only because he was extended an invitation to the White House for lunch and Mahathir felt that he had finally gotten the respect that was due him. But during my tour, the Department and the NSC had firmly opposed any step toward Mahathir. As far as Bush's Washington was concerned, Mahathir was just an annoyance. And that made my job in Kuala Lumpur difficult.

Q: Then in 1992 you came back to Washington to the Coordinator for Export Controls. What was that job?

CLEVELAND: Carter became very ill, so we came home in August, 1992. At the end of my tour in Malaysia, I was supposed to go the National Defense University (NDU) to teach a course on East Asia. In the back of my mind, I also hoped that I would find some time to write a book about my experiences and conclusions. In fact, I did start that assignment, but it wasn't long before one of the Department's senior officials, Frank Wisner, who had been Ambassador to the Philippines and on the ASEAN Ambassadors' tour, called me. He had since that trip become the Under Secretary for Security Assistance and Arms Control. He

needed some help on export controls and I accepted his offer. Allen Wendt had preceded me; he had been in the job for several years. It was an ambassadorial level position—Ambassador-at-Large. My name was never sent to the Senate for confirmation. Had Bush won reelection and had Wisner remained as Under Secretary, I think my nomination for an Ambassador-at-Large designation might have been sent to the Hill; that might have been important had I remained in the job.The Export Controller regulated dangerous dual use items to dangerous countries. I should note that the Department had never objected to every export license application for materials or goods going to communist or rogue regimes—Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, etc. DoD used to object to almost anything being sold to these countries. On the other hand, we also didn't want to approve every application, as the Commerce Department was inclined to do. The Department was selective, restricting the most dangerous things to the most dangerous countries. That put the Department in the middle which gave it a pivotal role in these decisions. So essentially the decisions on what license applications to approve were made by the Department of State. That gave Allen Wendt and then me, even though we were supported by a very small staff of four people, a little clout in the American export field. We of course always listened to the arguments of Defense and Commerce, but as the swing vote on many occasions, we were in the driver's seat. The system required Commerce to make an initial judgement on what further action an application might need because it was the original recipient of the application. Once we had decided that an application needed inter-agency review, it would send the application around to all the interested agencies. I think the Commerce Department screening limited the inter-agency review to a relatively small number of cases, but they were the most controversial and contentious and the key ones in the export control regime.

I performed that job for about four or five months. It was a good assignment. I was pretty much the master of my own ship and had considerable freedom. My approach to export controls was that, with the end of the Cold War, we needed to change the focus of the program. It had already moved somewhat from concern with exports to the Iron Curtain

countries to export to the “rogue” states. I thought that the trend was correct but that we should take a minimalist approach. I wanted to focus on the most dangerous exports to the most dangerous countries. In other words, I wanted our attention to concentrate on a relatively small number of potential problems because I felt that if we tried to control too much, we would not control anything at all. We couldn't get our partners—the Germans, the French, the British—to agree to end the sales of all of the products.

Export controllers are essentially interested in materials which are called “dual use”—e.g. very high tech computers, numerically controlled machine tools, certain alloys—which can be used both for civilian and military purposes. For example, we blocked machine tools for making nuclear weapons. It was those kinds of materials and goods that we were interested in keeping out of the hands of the world's most dangerous countries and people. There were and still are international institutions that are concerned with non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They worried about missile exports and tried to control the sale or transfers of nuclear material and chemical and biological armaments and components. The Political Military Bureau handled those matters. My job was to focus on the truly dangerous dual use items on our watch list. I started to try to change the system to meet the new challenges of the post-Cold War world, with emphasis on “dual use” materials and goods that might be used quite innocently in the civilian sector, but might also be a key components in the manufacturing of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

To illustrate our problem let me cite a case. The Department had difficulty over the sale of Mack trucks to Iran; the Iranians loved those trucks but there were some people who felt that they could be used to transport troops and military material. It was a politically sensitive issue in an election year. I took the position, backed by Wisner, that we should go ahead with that sale; the trucks might well be used for military purposes, but there was no way that we could insure that no other country would sell the trucks. Trucks were not the kind of goods that we should worry about, I believed. There were some people who objected the sale of anything to Iran and some other countries. In the final analysis, we

did embargo sales of Mack trucks and other American large trucks. The only people that were penalized by our policy was the Mack truck company. Mercedes and Volvo were delighted; they made the sales. Iran was happy; it got trucks even if they weren't their first preference. The US policy was self-defeating.

As I said, we tried to get our allies to join us in determining a shorter, but much more highly restrictive list of materials and goods that could not be exported. For an embargo to be effective, all sources had to agree to it. Eventually, we hoped to get the Russians to join us. We were also interested in maintaining COCOM expertise. Its Secretariat was staffed with people who had many years of experience and who in general had been very successful in limiting exports to the Soviet Union. I thought that it would be useful to have those people continuing to work on exports control issues; there was no good reason to replace them and lose all that expertise. We were making some headway, I think, towards this new export regime, when President Clinton replaced Bush. The new administration seemed to have little interest in this minimalist approach to export controls. I am not sure to this day what the new administration was trying to do. I think it wanted to broaden the approach to include conventional weapons. I don't think they were very effective; my understanding is they never got our allies to support effectively whatever export control program was developed.

The Europeans were unquestionably difficult. We took the position of trying to persuade them to support our new direction; i.e. to be very rigorous on a limited number of items. The Europeans of course were looking for markets wherever they could. They were not, in many respects, competitive with us and they consequently were more interested in the commercial aspects of arms control than the political/security issues that were of importance to us as the leader of the Free World. So we were always in the position of trying to persuade the Europeans that certain sales were not in our mutual interest. The British were the most responsive usually; they often shared our concerns, but not always. The Germans were the next most amenable Europeans—although on occasions they

could be troublesome as were the Japanese as well—and the Italians would usually side with us. But the French were always difficult.

I must say that this was my first experience in dealing with the European community; I found it interesting to be able in a matter of a few days, to cover so many capitals and have so many substantive conversations. It was a new challenge that I enjoyed. I believe that if I had been given the opportunity to pursue my goals after the US elections, we might have made some progress. I was optimistic, even at the end, that the Europeans and the Japanese would eventually sign on to our policy. I thought we could reach some agreement on a very limited but tough policy. The goal of limiting access of material and components and arms for certain countries and groups should hold some appeal to all of the countries that might be subjected to threats from the states and groups that practiced terrorism; I really thought that given time, we could bring the Europeans and the Japanese around to our way of approaching the subject of export controls. There were already certain elements in each government that agreed with us; it was a matter of just working at the problem and supporting the elements that agreed with us until governments accepted our views as established policy. I thought we could build momentum.

I told Lynn Davis, the new Under Secretary for Arms Control in the Clinton administration, that I thought that we should continue to have commercial and security interests compete within the Department, raising issues to the Secretary if necessary. I used the truck to Iran issue as an illustration; there our commercial and security interests clashed. There were many cases I said where the regional bureaus, the arms control agencies and the economic bureau not to mention other agencies differed in their perspectives and therefore in their views on particular export license applications. Sometimes, they could reach an agreed position; sometimes, they could not and if the issue was important enough, I thought it was healthy for the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary to become involved. Lynn Davis did not agree; she and Joan Spero—the new Under Secretary for Economic Affairs—already had had this discussion. When I made this argument, I was not anymore successful than Joan Spero had been. Davis just stared at me—for about twenty seconds.

It became an embarrassing situation; she just stared at me and said nothing. I finally said something and left, not only her office, but the position of Coordinator for Export Controls as well. In fact, the position was changed to a deputy assistant secretaryship in the Bureau of Politico/Military Affairs. That made the job part of the PM approach to export controls which generally opposed a wide range of exports. That Bureau kept professing that it had an open mind and was always available to listen to the arguments of the American commercial exporter, but I don't think that has been the case. To this day, American business is annoyed by the Department's process under the Clinton administration. It does not feel that its interests are being properly weighed. As I said, I argued for a balanced minimalist approach to export controls, but that was not consonant with Davis' and the new Administration's views.

Q: So you left Lynn Davis in 1993 and became the Coordinator for Business Affairs. What was that job?

CLEVELAND: Actually, after I left Davis' office, I went back to NDU. I had been there only a few weeks when I was called by Joan Spero's Executive Assistant and asked whether I would be interested in the Coordinator for Business Affairs job. This was a new job that Joan was trying to establish in her office. So I talked to her and then accepted the offer. She wanted someone who would insure that US economic interests would be pursued with some vigor by the regional bureaus and the overseas posts. She wanted the Department and the Foreign Service to be of assistance to US business by supporting efforts it was making to win bids and trying to sell American goods and services overseas. I told her that if she really was serious about this position having an impact, she should then seek an Ambassador-at-Large designation for the incumbent; that would have required Senate confirmation. I should note parenthetically that the idea for such a Coordinator had really started when Secretary Christopher made a statement on the Hill that as secretary he was going to be the “American Desk Officer.” He wanted to make it clear that the Department would really begin to support American business and that it would view commercial

interests as having a high priority among US foreign policy objectives. I thought my suggestion was consistent with that priority.

But I immediately ran into difficulties. I was never given a Senate confirmed appointment; I never met the Secretary; my position was in fact just part of the Economic Bureau working for Dan Terullo, who was the Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs. In fact, Terullo seemed opposed to the idea of a special coordinator and I think viewed me as suspect the whole time I was there. So bureaucratically, I didn't have any clout and my boss really didn't give me much time, attention, or support.

Nevertheless, I started trying to organize the Department to give some muscle to the Secretary's declaration. I asked each regional bureau to designate an official who would be responsible for promoting US commercial interests in his or her region. On paper, the bureaus would appoint a deputy assistant secretary, who would immediately assign the task to the Office for Economic Affairs where it would be handled by a deputy. I was trying to get the Department organized to participate both in Washington and overseas in this push for American business interests. In Washington, this called for a major cultural change in the Department which hither to had given lip service, if that much, to US commercial interests. Actually, I think there was considerable support for this change; there were many officials who not only accepted but were interested in the new commercial emphasis in foreign policy. To the extent that we could get this large target to be the focus of activity within the US government, I believe that it was a worthwhile effort.

I think we accomplished a couple of things. First, we set up an office which, even given its relatively low level in the bureaucracy, raised the Department's consciousness about the issue. We held some conferences on the subject of government assistance to US business, addressed and attended by representatives of business and the bureaucracy. We set up a series of breakfast meetings between the Secretary and businessmen, although, after arranging this series, I was not invited to attend it—which seemed a little odd. We also held meetings with the business coordinators in the regional bureaus. We

worked with OES on some actions. We undertook to work with some specific companies when they visited the Department. Most important we started to weigh in on some major commercial cases.

Outside the Department, we participated in a Commerce Department managed process, led by Jeff Garten, the Under Secretary for Commerce. This consisted in part of an inter-agency group—Commerce, Treasury, OPIC, Ex-Imp Bank and State. This group began to work on specific cases; e.g. a large contract to be let by Brazil for radar installations—the American manufacturer was Raytheon. We succeeded in helping Raytheon to win this billion dollar plus contract. One of the major components of the US offer was the Export Import Bank's willingness to match the financial offers included in a French bid. Through our intelligence sources, we found out what the French were offering and then EX-IM matched it. That was a first, I think. In addition, we got President Clinton to write to his Brazilian counterpart in support of the Raytheon bid.

We had other similar successes, all of which we circulated to the field and to Departmental bureaus, so that they would understand that a new priority had been established in diplomacy. We did a lot of promotional work. We were never able to crack the export control process. American industry was upset with that process which unfortunately offset much of the goodwill we gained. I might also say that Secretary Christopher really never gave US exports the kind of support that Larry Eagleburger, for example, had given. The fellow who was doing business support work—Al White—saw Eagleburger all the time, even though he didn't have the title of “Coordinator.” If Eagleburger received a call from some American businessman, he would call White to his office and give him explicit directions on actions to be taken. As I said, I never saw the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary. I would see Joan Spero who was supportive but busy.

My conclusion: Our Embassies overseas are now in the forefront of putting US business high on their policy objectives; I think the Washington bureaucracy, however, is playing catch up ball. Ron Brown went around the world plugging US business; he was

instrumental in raising the profile of this effort in the minds of Washington and the field. I am not sure whether the policy objective was the priority or raising Ron Brown's visibility was the first goal, but he certainly succeeded in raising the level of support that the US government provides US business. I think the jury is still probably out on the question of how effective in general these efforts have been and whether they will have a lasting impact—in comparison to the efforts of other governments. It is certainly clear that in individual cases, the US government involvement was crucial and perhaps even pivotal.

It is also certainly true that US imports have grown considerably in the last decade; how much of that can be attributed to US government support has yet to be determined. I think that in the Japanese situation, for example, you can say with some certainty that the involvement of its government in export promotion has been critical. As I say, there is growing evidence that our embassies are beginning to be instrumental, but a total evaluation is yet to be made. It is also true that Clinton may be the first—at least among the first—who has picked up the phone or pen and made his support for an American business venture known to his counterpart in an another country. Nevertheless, I still think that the Washington bureaucracy could have done more and I did leave the Coordinator job in some frustration.

I was ready to retire in 1994 in any case, but after a year as Coordinator, in light of lack of support from higher echelons, I felt little incentive to stay. Had such support been forthcoming, I might have stayed and perhaps could have moved the ball a little further, but in the absence of that key factor, I thought export promotion should be done by someone else. There are opportunities for the Department to be helpful to American business; it just hasn't yet become excited by that prospect. If the Secretary really decided to be the “American Desk Officer” and push American exports and investments, the Department could be a major player. But it needs a change in the culture of the Department; the transfer of the commercial service from the State Department to

Commerce, which took several years ago, was not seen as a great loss by the Department at the time and I don't think there has been an sufficient change of attitude since.

Q: Paul, for some reason I neglected to ask you whether you had any final thoughts on your career. You might want to add something at the end of this interview on that issue.

CLEVELAND: Final thoughts on my Foreign Service career are largely positive. Even discounting some of the rose-colored hindsight we tend to have, I recall often saying to myself how much I was enjoying my work and my life, overseas particularly. Where else could one have such an opportunity to learn about history, politics, economics and foreign culture, and then actually have an opportunity to write and do something about them—no matter how small a something. The professional career was interesting always, sometimes exciting, and in the end rewarding. The chance to live in, not just visit foreign places was personally enjoyable. Life constantly imposed itself on you and was full of surprises—usually interesting, although sometimes unpleasant. The FSOs we knew were largely outstanding people and friends.

Regrets? I feel that I could have done better throughout my life helping Carter and our children enjoy the overseas experience. Carter was often stuck with the hard chores: health, education, entertaining an endless stream of officials. She was the best there was in East Asia at what she did, and deserved more attention and support than I gave. Too often my fun was at family expense. But as C. says: you cannot erase the tape.

Would I do it again? Yes. And I'd do it in East Asia which I have seen grow from revolution to extraordinary success. Also I'd work harder, yet still do more for family. I'd try to exercise more self discipline, more dedication, more thought...but to be realistic, without luck, I would never have the same great opportunities. I think I was suited for the Foreign Service life, although others probably would demur. In any event, it was good to me, and I am grateful.

End of interview